



No pen can do justice to the extravagance and frolic inseparable from the character of the Irish people ; nor has any system of philosophy been discovered that can with moral fitness be applied to them. Phrenology fails to explain it ; for, so far as the craniums of Irishmen are concerned,

according to the most capital surveys hitherto made and reported on, it appears that, inasmuch as their moral and intellectual organs predominate over the physical and sensual, the people ought, therefore, to be ranked at the very tip-top of morality. We would warn the phrenologists, however, not to be too sanguine in drawing inferences from an examination of Paddy's head. Heaven only knows the scenes in which it is engaged, and the protuberances created by a long life of hard fighting. Many an organ and development is brought out on it by the cudgel, that never would have appeared had Nature been left to herself.

Drinking, fighting, and swearing, are the three great characteristics of every people. Paddy's love of fighting and of whisky has been long proverbial ; and of his tact in swearing much has also been said. But there is one department of oath-making in which he stands unrivalled and unapproachable ; I mean the *alibi*. There is where he shines, where his oath, instead of being a mere matter of fact or opinion, rises up into the dignity of epic narrative, containing within itself all the complexity of

machinery, harmony of parts, and fertility of invention, by which your true epic should be characterised.

The Englishman, whom we will call the historian in swearing, will depose to the truth of this or that fact, but there the line is drawn: he swears his oath so far as he knows, and stands still. "I'm sure, for my part, I don't know; I've said all I knows about it," and beyond this his besotted intellect goeth not.

The Scotchman, on the other hand, who is the metaphysician in swearing, sometimes borders on equivocation. He decidedly goes farther than the Englishman, not because he has less honesty, but more prudence. He will assent to, or deny a proposition; for the Englishman's "I don't know," and the Scotchman's "I diinna ken," are two very distinct assertions when properly understood. The former stands out a monument of dulness, an insuperable barrier against inquiry, ingenuity, and fancy; but the latter frequently stretches itself so as to embrace hypothetically a particular opinion.

But Paddy! Put *him* forward to prove an *alibi* for his fourteenth or fifteenth cousin, and you will be gratified by the pomp, pride, and circumstance of true swearing. Every oath with him is an epic—pure poetry, abounding with humour, pathos, and the highest order of invention and talent. He is not at ease, it is true, under *facts*; there is something too common-place in dealing with them, which his genius scorns. But his flights—his flights are beautiful; and his episodes admirable and happy. In fact, he is an *improvisatore* at oath-taking; with this difference, that his *extempore* oaths possess all the ease and correctness of labour and design.

He is not, however, *altogether* averse to facts; but, like your true poet, he veils, changes, and modifies them with such skill, that they possess all the merit and graces of fiction. If he happen to make an assertion incompatible with the plan of the piece, his genius acquires fresh energy, enables him to widen the design, and to create new machinery, with such happiness of adaptation, that what appeared out of proportion or character is made, in his hands, to contribute to the general strength and beauty of the oath.

'Tis true, there is nothing perfect under the sun; but if there were, it would certainly be Paddy at an *alibi*. Some flaws, no doubt, occur; some slight inaccuracies may be noticed by a critical eye; an occasional anachronism stands out, and a mistake or so in geography; but let it be recollected that Paddy's *alibi* is but a human production; let us not judge him by harsher rules than those which we apply to Homer, Virgil, or Shakspeare.

"Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus," is allowed on all hands. Virgil made Dido and Æneas contemporary, though they were not so; and Shakspeare, by the creative power of his genius, changed an inland town into a sea-port. Come, come, have bowels. Let epic swearing be treated with the same courtesy shown to epic poetry, that is, if both are the production of a rare genius. I maintain, that when Paddy commits a blemish he is too harshly admonished for it. When he soars out of sight here, as occasionally happens, does he not frequently alight somewhere

about Sydney Bay, much against his own inclination? And if he puts forth a hasty production, is he not compelled, for the space of seven or fourteen years, to revise his oath? But, indeed, few works of fiction are properly encouraged in Ireland.

It would be unpardonable in us, however, to overlook the beneficial effects of Paddy's peculiar genius in swearing *alibi*. Some persons, who display their own egregious ignorance of morality, may be disposed to think that it tends to lessen the obligation of an oath, by inducing a habit among the people of swearing to what is not true. We look upon such persons as very dangerous to Ireland and to the repeal of the Union; and we request them not to push their principles too far in the disturbed parts of the country. Could society hold together a single day, if nothing but truth were *spoken*? Would not law and lawyers soon become obsolete, if nothing but truth were *sworn*? What would become of parliament if truth alone were uttered there? Its annual proceedings might be dispatched in a month. Fiction is the basis of society, the bond of commercial prosperity, the channel of communication between nation and nation, and not unfrequently the interpreter between a man and his own conscience.

For these, and many other reasons which we could adduce, we say with Paddy, "Long life to fiction!" When associated with swearing, it shines in its brightest colours. What, for instance, is calculated to produce the best and purest of the moral virtues so beautifully, as the swearing an *alibi*? Here are fortitude and a love of freedom resisting oppression; for it is well known that all law is oppression in Ireland.

There is compassion for the peculiar state of the poor boy, who, perhaps, *only* burned a family in their beds; benevolence to prompt the generous effort in his behalf; disinterestedness to run the risk of becoming an involuntary absentee; fortitude in encountering a host of brazen-faced lawyers; patience under the unsparing gripe of a cross-examiner; perseverance in conducting the oath to its close against a host of difficulties; and friendship, which bottoms and crowns them all.

Paddy's merits, however, touching the *alibi*, rest not here. Fiction on these occasions only teaches him how to perform a *duty*. It may be, that he is under the obligation of a previous oath *not* to give evidence *against* certain of his friends and associates. Now, could anything in the whole circle of religion or ethics be conceived that renders the epic style of swearing so incumbent upon Paddy? There is a kind of moral fitness in all things; for where the necessity of invention exists, it is consolatory to reflect that the ability to invent is bestowed along with it.

Next to the *alibi* comes Paddy's powers in sustaining a cross-examination. Many persons think that *this* is his *forte*; but we cannot yield to such an opinion, nor compromise his originality of conception in the scope and plan of an *alibi*. It is marked by a minuteness of touch, and a peculiarity of expression which give it every appearance of real life. The circumstances are so well imagined, the groups so naturally disposed, the colouring so finished, and the back-ground in such fine perspective, that the whole picture presents you with such keeping and *vraisemblance*, as could be accomplished only by the genius of a master.

In point of interest, however, we must admit that his ability in a cross-examination ranks next to his skill in *planning an alibi*. There is, in the former, a versatility of talent that keeps him always ready ; a happiness of retort, generally disastrous to the wit of the most established cross-examiner ; an apparent simplicity, which is quite as impenetrable as the lawyer's assurance ; a *vis comica*, which puts the court in tears ; and an originality of sorrow, that often convulses it with laughter. His resources, when he is pressed, are inexhaustible ; and the address with which he contrives to gain time, that he may suit his reply to the object of his evidence, is beyond all praise. And yet his appearance when he mounts the table is anything but prepossessing ; a sheepish look, and a loose-jointed frame of body, wrapped in a fricze great-coat, do not promise much. Nay, there is often a rueful blank expression in his visage, which might lead a stranger to anticipate nothing but blunders and dulness. This, however, is hypocrisy of the first water. Just observe the tact with which he places his caubeen upon the table, his kippeen across it, and the experienced air with which he pulls up the waistbands of his breeches, absolutely girding his loins for battle. 'T is true his blue eye has at present nothing remarkable in it, except a drop or two of the native ; but that is *not* remarkable.

When the direct examination has been concluded, nothing can be finer than the simplicity with which he turns round to the lawyer who is to cross-examine him. Yet, as if conscious that firmness and caution are his main guards, he again pulls up his waistbands with a more vigorous hitch, looks shyly into the very eyes of his opponent, and awaits the first blow.

The question at length comes ; and Paddy, after having raised the collar of his big coat on his shoulder, and twisted up the shoulder along with it, directly puts the query back to the lawyer, without altering a syllable of it, for the purpose of ascertaining more accurately whether that is the precise question that has been put to him ; for Paddy is conscientious. Then is the science displayed on both sides. The one, a veteran, trained in all the technicalities of legal puzzles, irony, blarney, sarcasm, impudence, stock jokes, quirks, rigmarolery, brow-beating, ridicule, and subtilty ; the other a poor peasaut, relying only upon the justice of a good cause and the gifts of nature ; without either experience or learning, and with nothing but his native modesty to meet the forensic effrontery of his antagonist.

Our readers will perceive that the odds are a thousand to one against Paddy ; yet, when he replies to a hackneyed genius at cross-examination, how does it happen that he uniformly elicits those roars of laughter which rise in the court, and convulse it from the judge to the crier ? In this laugh, which is usually at the expense of the cross-examiner, Paddy himself always joins, so that the counsel has the double satisfaction of being made not only the jest of the judge and his brother lawyers, but of the ragged witness whom he attempted to make ridiculous.

It is not impossible that this merry mode of dispensing justice may somewhat encourage Paddy in that independence of mind which relishes not the idea of being altogether bound by oaths that are too often



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administered with a jocular spirit. To most of the Irish in general an oath is a solemn, to some, an awful thing. Of this wholesome reverence for its sanction, two or three testimonies given in a court of justice usually cure them. The indifferent, business-like manner in which the oaths are put, the sing-song tone of voice, the rapid utterance of the words, give to this solemn act an appearance of excellent burlesque, which ultimately renders the whole proceedings remarkable for the absence of truth and reality; but, at the same time, gives them unquestionable merit as a dramatic representation, abounding with fiction, well related and ably acted.

Thumb-kissing is another feature in Paddy's adroitness too important to be passed over in silence. Here his tact shines out again! It would be impossible for him, in many cases, to meet the perplexities of a cross-examination so cleverly as he does, if he did not believe that he had, by kissing his thumb instead of the book, actually taken no oath, and consequently given to himself a wider range of action. We must admit, however, that this very circumstance involves him in difficulties which are sometimes peculiarly embarrassing. Taking everything into consideration, the prospect of freedom for his sixth cousin, the consciousness of having kissed his thumb, or the consoling reflection that he swore only on a *Law Bible*, it must be granted that the opportunities presented by a cross-examination are well calculated to display his wit, humour, and fertility of invention. He is accordingly great in it; but still we maintain that his execution of an *alibi* is his ablest performance, comprising, as it does, both the conception and construction of the work.

Both the oaths and imprecations of the Irish display, like those who use them, indications of great cruelty and great humour. Many of the former exhibit that ingenuity which comes out when Paddy is on his cross-examination in a court of justice. Every people, it is true, have resorted to the habit of mutilating or changing in their oaths the letters which form the Creator's name; but we question if any have surpassed the Irish in the cleverness with which they accomplish it. Mock oaths are habitual to Irishmen in ordinary conversation; but the use of any or all of them is not considered to constitute an oath: on the contrary, they are in the mouths of many who would not, except upon a very solemn occasion indeed, swear by the name of the Deity in its proper form.

The ingenuity of their mock oaths is sufficient to occasion much perplexity to any one disposed to consider it in connexion with the character and moral feelings of the people. Whether to note it as a reluctance on their part to incur the guilt of an oath, or as a proof of habitual tact in evading it by artifice, is manifestly a difficulty hard to be overcome. We are decidedly inclined to the former; for although there is much laxity of principle among Irishmen, naturally to be expected from men whose moral state has been neglected by the legislature, and deteriorated by political and religious asperity, acting upon quick passions and badly regulated minds—yet we know that they possess, after all, a strong, but vague undirected sense of devotional feeling and reverence, which are associated with great crimes and awfully dark shades of character. This explains one chief cause of the sympathy which is felt in Ireland for

criminals from whom the law exacts the fatal penalty of death ; and it also accounts, independently of the existence of any illegal association, for the terrible retribution inflicted upon those who come forward to prosecute them. It is not in Ireland with criminals as in other countries, where the character of a murderer or incendiary is notoriously bad, as resulting from a life of gradual profligacy and villany. Far from it. In Ireland you will find those crimes perpetrated by men who are good fathers, good husbands, good sons, and good neighbours—by men who would share their last morsel or their last shilling with a fellow-creature in distress—who would generously lose their lives for a man who had obliged them, provided he had not incurred their enmity—and who would protect a defenceless stranger as far as lay in their power.

There are some mock oaths among Irishmen which must have had their origin amongst those whose habits of thought were much more elevated than could be supposed to characterise the lower orders. “By the powers of death” is never now used as we have written it ; but the ludicrous travesty of it, “by the powdhers o’ delf,” is quite common. Of this and other mock oaths it may be right to observe, that those who swear by them are in general ignorant of their proper origin. There are some, however, of this description whose original form is well known. One of these Paddy displays considerable ingenuity in using. “By the cross” can scarcely be classed under the mock oaths, but the manner in which it is pressed into asseverations is amusing. When Paddy is affirming a truth he swears “by the crass” simply, and this with him is an oath of considerable obligation. He generally, in order to render it more impressive, accompanies it with suitable action, that is, he places the fore-finger of each hand across, that he may assail you through two senses instead of one. On the contrary, when he intends to hoax you by asserting what is not true, he ingeniously multiplies the oath, and swears “by the five crasses,” that is by his own five fingers, placing at the same time his four fingers and his thumbs across each other in a most impressive and vehement manner. Don’t believe him then—the knave is lying as fast as possible, and with no remorse. “By the crass o’ Christ” is an oath of much solemnity, and seldom used in a falsehood. Paddy also often places two bits of straws across, and sometimes two sticks, upon which he swears with an appearance of great heat and sincerity—*sed caveto !*

Irishmen generally consider iron as a sacred metal. In the interior of the country, the thieves (but few in number) are frequently averse to stealing it. Why it possesses this hold upon their affections it is difficult to say, but it is certain that they rank it among their sacred things, consider that to find it is lucky, and nail it over their doors when found in the convenient shape of a horse-shoe. It is also used as a medium of asserting truth. We believe, however, that the sanction it imposes is not very strong. “By this blessed iron !”—“by this blessed an’ holy iron !” are oaths of an inferior grade ; but if the circumstance on which they are founded be a matter of indifference, they seldom depart from truth in using them.

We have said that Paddy, when engaged in a fight, is never at a loss for a weapon, and we may also affirm, that he is never at a loss for an

oath. When relating a narrative, or some other circumstance of his own invention, if contradicted, he will corroborate it, in order to sustain his credit or produce the proper impression, by an abrupt oath upon the first object he can seize. "Arrah, nonsense! by this pipe in my hand, it's as thrue as"—and then, before he completes the illustration, he goes on with a fine specimen of equivocation—"By the stool I'm sittin' an, *it is*; an' what more would you have from me barrin' I take my book oath of it?" Thus does he, under the mask of an insinuation, induce you to believe that he has actually sworn it, whereas the oath is always left undefined and incomplete.

Sometimes he is exceedingly comprehensive in his adjurations, and swears upon a magnificent scale; as, for instance,—“By the contints of all the books that ever wor opened an' shut, it's as thrue as the sun to the dial.” This certainly leaves “the five crasses” immeasurably behind. However, be cautious, and not too confident in taking so sweeping and learned an oath upon trust, notwithstanding its imposing effect. We grant, indeed, that an oath which comprehends within its scope all the learned libraries of Europe, including even the Alexandrian of old, is not only an erudite one, but establishes in a high degree the taste of the swearer, and displays on his part an uncommon grasp of intellect. Still we recommend you, whenever you hear an alleged fact substantiated by it, to set your ear as sharply as possible; for, after all, it is more than probable that every book by which he has sworn might be contained in a nutshell. The secret may be briefly explained:—Paddy is in the habit of substituting the word *never* for *ever*. “By all the books that *never* wor opened or shut,” the reader perceives, is only a flourish of trumpets—a mere delusion of the enemy.

In fact, Paddy has oaths rising gradually from the lying ludicrous to the superstitious solemn, each of which finely illustrates the nature of the subject to which it is applied. When he swears “By the contints o' Moll Kelly's Primer,” or “By the piper that played afore Moses,” you are, perhaps, as strongly inclined to believe him as when he draws upon a more serious oath; that is, you almost regret the thing is not the gospel that Paddy asserts it to be. In the former sense, the humorous narrative which calls forth the laughable burlesque of “By the piper o' Moses,” is usually the richest lie in the whole range of fiction.

Paddy is, in his ejaculatory, as well as in all his other mock oaths, a kind of smuggler in morality, imposing as often as he can upon his own conscience, and upon those who exercise spiritual authority over him. Perhaps more of his oaths are blood-stained than would be found among the inhabitants of all Christendom put together.

Paddy's oaths in his amours are generally rich specimens of humorous knavery and cunning. It occasionally happens—but for the honour of our virtuous countrywomen, we say but rarely—that by the honey of his flattering and delusive tongue, he succeeds in placing some unsuspecting girl's reputation in rather a hazardous predicament. When the priest comes to investigate the affair, and to cause him to make compensation to the innocent creature who suffered by his blandishments, it is almost uniformly ascertained that, in order to satisfy her scruples as to the

honesty of his promises, he had sworn marriage to her *on a book of ballads* !!! In other cases *blank books* have been used for the same purpose.

If, however, you wish to pin Paddy up in a corner, get him a Relic, a Catholic prayer-book, or a Douay Bible to swear upon. Here is where the fox—notwithstanding all his turnings and windings upon heretic Bibles, books of ballads, or mock oaths—is caught at last. The strongest principle in him is superstition. It may be found as the prime mover in his best and worst actions. An atrocious man, who is superstitious, will perform many good and charitable actions, with a hope that their merit in the sight of God may cancel the guilt of his crimes. On the other hand, a good man, who is superstitiously the slave of his religious opinions, will lend himself to those illegal combinations, whose object is, by keeping ready a system of organised opposition to an heretical government, to fulfil, if a political crisis should render it practicable, the absurd prophecies of Pastorini and Columbkil. Although the prophecies of the former would appear to be out of date to a rational reader, yet Paddy, who can see farther into prophecy than any rational reader, honestly believes that Pastorini has left for those who are superstitiously given, sufficient range of expectation in several parts of his work.

We might enumerate many other oaths in frequent use among the peasantry; but as our object is not to detail them at full length, we trust that those already specified may be considered sufficient to enable our readers to get a fuller insight into their character, and their moral influence upon the people.

The next thing which occurs to us in connexion with the present subject, is *cursing*; and here again Paddy holds the first place. His imprecations are often full, bitter, and intense. Indeed, there is more poetry and epigrammatic point in them than in those of any other country in the world.

We find it a difficult thing to enumerate the Irish curses, so as to do justice to a subject so varied and so liable to be shifted and improved by the fertile genius of those who send them abroad. Indeed, to reduce them into order and method would be a task of considerable difficulty. Every occasion, and every fit of passion, frequently produce a new curse, perhaps equal in bitterness to any that has gone before it.

Many of the Irish imprecations are difficult to be understood, having their origin in some historical event, or in poetical metaphors that require a considerable process of reasoning to explain them. Of this twofold class is that general one, "The curse of Cromwell on you!" which means, may you suffer all that a tyrant like Cromwell would inflict! and "The curse o' the crows upon you!" which is probably an allusion to the Danish invasion—a raven being the symbol of Denmark; or it may be tantamount to "May you rot on the hills, that the crows may feed upon your carcase!" Perhaps it may thus be understood to imprecate death upon you or some member of your house—alluding to the superstition of rooks hovering over the habitations of the sick, when the malady with which they are afflicted is known to be fatal. Indeed, the latter must certainly be the meaning of it, as is evident from the proverb of "Die, an' give the crow a puddin'."

"Hell's cure to you!—the devil's luck to you!—high hanging to you!—hard feeding to you!—a short coorse to you!" are all pretty intense, and generally used under provocation and passion. In these cases the curses just mentioned are directed immediately to the offensive object, and there certainly is no want of the *malus animus* to give them energy. It would be easy to multiply the imprecations belonging to this class among the peasantry, but the task is rather unpleasant. There are a few, however, which, in consequence of their ingenuity, we cannot pass over: they are, in sooth, studies for the swearer. "May you never die till you see your own funeral!" is a very beautiful specimen of the periphrasis: it simply means, may you be hanged; for he who is hanged is humorously said to be favoured with a view of that sombre spectacle, by which they mean the crowd that attends an execution. To the same purpose is, "May you die wid a caper in your heel!"—"May you die in your pumps!"—"May your last dance be a hornpipe on the air!" These are all emblematic of hanging, and are uttered sometimes in jest, and occasionally in earnest. "May the grass grow before your door!" is highly imaginative and poetical. Nothing, indeed, can present the mind with a stronger or more picturesque emblem of desolation and ruin. Its malignity is terrible.

There are also mock imprecations as well as mock oaths. Of this character are, "The devil go with you an' sixpence, an' thin you'll want neither money nor company!" This humorous and considerate curse is generally confined to the female sex. When Paddy happens to be in a romping mood, and teases his sweetheart too much, she usually utters it with a countenance combating with smiles and frowns, whilst she stands in the act of pinning up her dishevelled hair; her cheek, particularly the one next Paddy, deepened into a becoming blush.

"Bad scan to you!" is another form seldom used in anger: it is the same as "Hard feeding to you!" "Bad win' to you!" is "Ill health to you!" it is nearly the same as "Consumin' (consumption) to you!" Two other imprecations come under this head, which we will class together, because they are counterparts of each other, with this difference, that one of them is the most subtilely and intensely withering in its purport that can well be conceived. The one is that common curse, "Bad 'cess to you!" that is, bad success to you: we may identify it with "Hard fortune to you!" The other is a keen one, indeed—"Sweet bad luck to you!" Now, whether we consider the epithet sweet as bitterly ironical, or deem it as a wish that prosperity may harden the heart to the accomplishment of future damnation, as in the case of Dives, we must in either sense grant that it is an oath of powerful hatred and venom. Occasionally the curse of "Bad luck to you!" produces an admirable retort, which is pretty common. When one man applies it to another, he is answered with "Good luck to you, thin; but *may neither of them ever happen.*"

"Six eggs to you, an' half-a-dozen o' them rotten!"—like "The devil go with you an' sixpence!" is another of those pleasantries which mostly occur in the good-humoured *badinage* between the sexes. It implies disappointment.

There is a species of imprecation prevalent among Irishmen which we may term neutral. It is ended by the word *bit*, and merely results from a habit of swearing where there is no malignity of purpose. An Irishman, when corroborating an assertion, however true or false, will often say, "Bad luck to the bit but it is;"—"Divil fire the bit but it's thruth!"—"Damn the bit but it is!" and so on. In this form the mind is not moved, nor the passions excited: it is therefore probably the most insipid of all their imprecations.

Some of the most dreadful maledictions are to be heard among the confirmed mendicants of Ireland. The wit, the gall, and the poetry of these are uncommon. "May you melt off the earth like snow off the ditch!" is one of a high order and intense malignity; but it is not exclusively confined to mendicants, although they form that class among which it is most prevalent. Nearly related to this is, "May you melt like butter before a summer sun!" These are, indeed, essentially poetical; they present the mind with appropriate imagery, and exhibit a comparison perfectly just and striking. The former we think unrivalled.

Some of the Irish imprecations would appear to have come down to us from the Ordeals. Of this class, probably, are the following: "May this be poison to me!"—"May I be roasted on red-hot iron!" Others of them, from their boldness of metaphor, seem to be of Oriental descent. One expression, indeed, is strikingly so. When a deep offence is offered to an Irishman, under such peculiar circumstances that he cannot immediately retaliate, he usually replies to his enemy—"You'll sup sorrow for this!"—"You'll curse the day it happened!"—"I'll make you rub your heels together!" All these figurative denunciations are used for the purpose of intimating the pain and agony he will compel his enemy to suffer.

We cannot omit a form of imprecation for good, which is also habitual among the peasantry of Ireland. It is certainly harmless, and argues benevolence of heart. We mean such expressions as the following: "Salvation to me!—May I never do harm!—May I never do an ill turn!—May I never sin!" These are generally used by men who are blameless and peaceable in their lives—simple and well-disposed in their intercourse with the world.

At the head of those Irish imprecations which are dreaded by the people, the Excommunication, of course, holds the first and most formidable place. In the eyes of men of sense it is as absurd as it is illiberal; but to the ignorant and superstitious, who look upon it as anything but a *brutum fulmen*, it is terrible indeed.

Next in order are the curses of priests in their private capacity, pilgrims, mendicants, and idiots. Of those also Paddy entertains a wholesome dread; a circumstance which the pilgrim and mendicant turn with great judgment to their own account. Many a legend and anecdote do such chroniclers relate, when the family, with whom they rest for the night, are all seated around the winter hearth. These are often illustrations of the baneful effects of the poor man's curse. Of course they produce a proper impression; and, accordingly, Paddy avoids offending such persons in any way that might bring him under their displeasure.

A certain class of curses much dreaded in Ireland are those of the widow and the orphan. There is, however, something touching and beautiful in this fear of injuring the sorrowful and unprotected. It is, we are happy to say, a becoming and prominent feature in Paddy's character; for, to do him justice in his virtues as well as in his vices, we repeat that he cannot be surpassed in his humanity to the lonely widow and her helpless orphans. He will collect a number of his friends, and proceed with them in a body to plant her bit of potato ground, to reap her oats, to draw home her turf, or secure her hay. Nay, he will beguile her of her sorrows with a natural sympathy and delicacy that do him honour: his heart is open to her complaints, and his hand ever extended to assist her.

There is a strange opinion to be found in Ireland upon the subject of curses. The peasantry think that a curse, no matter how uttered, will fall on *something*; but that it depends upon the person against whom it is directed, whether or not it will descend on him. A curse, we have heard them say, will rest for seven years in the air, ready to alight upon the head of the person who provoked the malediction. It hovers over him, like a kite over its prey, watching the moment when he may be abandoned by his guardian angel: if this occurs, it shoots with the rapidity of a meteor on his head, and clings to him in the shape of illness, temptation, or some other calamity.

They think, however, that the blessing of one person may cancel the curse of another; but this opinion does not affect the theory we have just mentioned. When a man experiences an unpleasant accident, they will say, "He has had some poor body's curse;" and, on the contrary, when he narrowly escapes it, they say, "He has had some poor body's blessing."

There is no country in which the phrases of good-will and affection are so strong as in Ireland. The Irish language actually flows with the milk and honey of love and friendship. Sweet and palatable is it to the other sex, and sweetly can Paddy, with his deluding ways, administer it to them from the top of his mellifluous tongue, as a dove feeds her young, or as a kind mother her babe, shaping with her own pretty mouth every morsel of the delicate viands before it goes into that of the infant. In this manner does Paddy, seated behind a ditch, of a bright Sunday, when he ought to be at Mass, feed up some innocent girl, not with "false music," but with sweet words; for nothing more musical or melting than his brogue ever dissolved a female heart. Indeed, it is of the danger to be apprehended from the melody of his voice, that the admirable and appropriate proverb speaks; for when he addresses his sweetheart, under circumstances that justify suspicion, it is generally said—"Paddy's feedin' her up wid false music."

What language has a phrase equal in beauty and tenderness to *cushla ma chree—pulse of my heart*? Can it be paralleled in the whole range of all that are, ever were, or ever will be spoken, for music, sweetness, and a knowledge of anatomy? If Paddy is unrivalled at swearing, he fairly throws the world behind him at the blarney. In professing friendship, and making love, give him but a *taste of the native*, and he is a walking honey-comb, that every woman who sees him wishes to have a

lick at ; and Heaven knows, that frequently, at all times, and in all places, does he get himself *licked* on their account.

Another expression of peculiar force is *vick machree*—or, son of my heart. This is not only elegant, but affectionate, beyond almost any other phrase except the foregoing. It is, in a sense somewhat different from that in which the philosophical poet has used it, a beautiful comment upon the sentiment of “the child’s the father of the man,” uttered by the great, we might almost say, the glorious, Wordsworth.

We have seen many a youth, on more occasions than one, standing in profound affliction over the dead body of his aged father, exclaiming, “*Ahir, vick machree—vick machree—wuil thu marra wo’um ? Wuil thu marra wo’um ?* Father, son of my heart, son of my heart, art thou dead from me—art thou dead from me ?” An expression, we think, under any circumstances, not to be surpassed in the intensity of domestic affection which it expresses ; but under those alluded to, we consider it altogether elevated in exquisite and poetic beauty above the most powerful symbols of Oriental imagery.

A third phrase peculiar to love and affection, is “*Manim asthee hu—* or, My soul’s within you.” Every person acquainted with languages knows how much an idiom suffers by a literal translation. How beautiful, then, how tender and powerful, must those short expressions be, uttered, too, with a fervour of manner peculiar to a deeply feeling people, when, even after a literal translation, they carry so much of their tenderness and energy into a language whose genius is cold when compared to the glowing beauty of the Irish.

Mavourneen dheelish, too, is only a short phrase, but, coming warm and mellowed from Paddy’s lips into the ear of his *colleen dhas*, it is a perfect spell—a sweet murmur, to which the *lenis susurrus* of the Hybla bees is, with all their honey, jarring discord. How tame is “My sweet darling,” its literal translation, compared to its soft and lulling intonations. There is a dissolving, entrancing, beguiling, deluding, flattering, insinuating, coaxing, winning, inveigling, roguish, palavering, come-over-ing, comed-hering, consenting, blarneying, killing, willing, charm in it, worth all the philtres that ever the gross knavery of a withered alchymist imposed upon the credulity of those who inhabit the *other* nations of the earth—for we don’t read that these shrivelled philtre-mongers ever prospered in *Ireland*.

No, no—let Paddy alone. If he hates intensely, and effectually, he loves intensely, comprehensively, and gallantly. To love with power is a proof of a large soul, and to hate well is, according to the great moralist, a thing in itself to be loved. Ireland is, therefore, through all its sects, parties, and religions, an amicable nation. Their affections are, indeed, so vivid, that they scruple not sometimes to kill each other with kindness : but we hope that the march of love and friendship will not only keep pace with, but outstrip, the march of intellect.



PETER CONNELL was for many years of his life a pattern and a proverb for industry and sobriety. He first began the world as keeper of a shebeen-house at the cross-roads, about four miles from the town of Ballypoteen. He was decidedly an honest man to his neighbours, but a knave to excisemen, whom he hated by a kind of instinct that he had, which prompted him, in order to satisfy his conscience, to render them every practicable injury within the compass of his ingenuity. Shebeen-house keepers and excisemen have been, time out of mind, destructive of each other; the exciseman pouncing like a beast or bird of prey upon the shebeen man and his illicit spirits; the shebeen man staving in the exciseman, like a barrel of doublings, by a knock from behind a hedge, which sometimes sent him to that world which is emphatically called the world of spirits. For this, it sometimes happened that the shebeen man was hanged; but as his death only multiplied that of the excisemen in a geometrical ratio, the sharp-scented fraternity resolved, if possible, not to risk their lives, either by exposing themselves to the necessity of travelling by night, or prosecuting by day. In this they acted wisely and prudently: fewer of the unfortunate peasantry were shot in their rencounters with the yeomanry or military on such occasions, and the retaliations became by degrees less frequent, until, at length, the murder of a gauger became a rare occurrence in the country.

Peter, before his marriage, had wrought as labouring servant to a man who kept two or three private stills in those caverns among the remote mountains, to which the gauger never thought of penetrating, because he supposed that no human enterprise would have ever dreamt of advancing farther into them than appeared to *him* to be practicable. In this he was frequently mistaken; for though the still-house was in many cases inaccessible to horses, yet by the contrivance of *slipes*—a kind of sledge—a dozen men could draw a couple of sacks of barley with less trouble, and at a quicker pace, than if horses only had been employed. By this, and many other similar contrivances, the peasantry were often able to carry on the work of private distillation in places so distant, that few persons could suspect them as likely to be chosen for such purposes. The uncommon personal strength, the daring spirit, and great adroitness of Peter Connell, rendered him a very valuable acquisition to his master in the course of his illicit occupations. Peter was, in addition to his other qualities, sober and ready-witted, so that whenever the gauger made his appearance, his expedients to baffle him were often inimitable. Those expedients did not, however, always arise from the exigency of the moment; they were often deliberately, and with much exertion of ingenuity, planned by the proprietors and friends of such establishments, perhaps for weeks before the gauger's visit occurred. But, on the other hand, as the gauger's object was to take them, if possible, by surprise, it frequently happened that his appearance was as unexpected as it was unwelcome. It was *then* that the prompt ingenuity of the people was fully seen, felt, and understood by the baffled exciseman, who too often had just grounds for bitterly cursing their talent at outwitting him.

Peter served his master, as a kind of superintendent in such places,

until he gained the full knowledge of distilling, according to the processes used by the most popular adepts in the art. Having acquired this, he set up as a professor, and had excellent business. In the meantime, he had put together by degrees a small purse of money, to the amount of about twenty guineas,—no inconsiderable sum for a young Irishman who intends to begin the world on his own account. He accordingly married, and, as the influence of a wife is usually not to be controlled during the honey-moon, Mrs. Connell prevailed on Peter to relinquish his trade of distiller, and to embrace some other mode of life that might not render their living so much asunder necessary. Peter suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and promised to have nothing more to do with private distillation, as a distiller. One of the greatest curses attending this lawless business, is the idle and irregular habit of life which it gradually induces. Peter could not now relish the labour of an agriculturist, to which he had been bred, and yet he was too prudent to sit down and draw his own and his wife's support from so exhaustible a source as twenty guineas. Two or three days passed, during which "he cudgelled his brains," to use his own expression, in plans for future subsistence; two or three consultations were held with Ellish, in which their heads were laid together, and, as it was still the honey-moon, the subject-matter of the consultation, of course, was completely forgotten. Before the expiration of a second month, however, they were able to think of many other things, in addition to the fondlings and endearments of a new-married couple. Peter was every day becoming more his own man, and Ellish by degrees more her own woman. "The purple light of love," which had changed Peter's red head into a rich auburn, and his swivel eye into a knowing wink, exceedingly irresistible in his bachelorship, as he made her believe, to the country girls—had passed away, taking the aforesaid auburn along with it, and leaving nothing but the genuine carrot behind. Peter, too, on opening his eyes one morning about the beginning of the third month, perceived that his wife was, after all, nothing more than a thumping red-cheeked wench, with good eyes, a mouth rather large, and a nose very much resembling, in its curve, the seat of a saddle, allowing the top to correspond with the pommel.

"Pether," said she, "it's like a dhrame to me that you're neglectin' your business, alanna."

"Is it you, beauty? but, may be, you'd first point out to me what business, barrin' buttherin' up yourself, I have to mind, you phanix bright?"

"Quit yourself, Pether! it's time for you to give up your ould ways; you caught one bird wid them, an' that's enough. What do you intind to do? It's full time for you to be lookin' about you."

"Lookin' about me! What do you mane, Ellish?"

"The dickens a bit o' me thought of it," replied the wife, laughing at the unintentional allusion to the circumspect character of Peter's eyes,—
"upon my faix, I didn't—ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, thin, but you're full o' your fun, sure enough, if that's what you're at. Maybe, avourneen, if I had looked right afore me, as I ought to do, it's Katty Murray an' her snug farm I'd have, instead of"—

Peter hesitated. The rapid feelings of a woman, and an Irishwoman, quick and tender, had come forth and subdued him. She had *not* voluntarily alluded to his eyes; but on seeing Peter offended, she immediately expressed that sorrow and submission which are most powerful when accompanied by innocence, and when meekly assumed, to pacify rather than to convince. A tear started to her eye, and with a voice melted into unaffected tenderness, she addressed him, but he scarcely gave her time to speak.

"No, avourneen, no, I won't say what I was goin' to mintion. I won't indeed, Ellish, dear; an' forgive me for woundin' your feelins, *alanna dhas*.* Hell resave her an' her farm! I dunna what put her into my head at all; but I thought you wor jokin' me about my eyes: an' sure if you war, acushla, that's no rason that I'd not allow you to do that an' more wid your own Pether. Give me a *sleuwther*,† agra—*a* sweet one, now!"

He then laid his mouth to hers, and immediately a sound, nearly resembling a pistol-shot, was heard through every part of the house. It was, in fact, a kiss upon a scale of such magnitude, that the Emperor of Morocco might not blush to be charged with it. A reconciliation took place, and in due time it was determined that Peter, as he understood poteen, should open a shebeen-house.

The moment this resolution was made, the wife kept coaxing him, until he took a small house at the cross-roads before alluded to, where, in the course of a short time, he was established, if not in his own line, yet in a mode of life approximating to it as nearly as the inclination of Ellish would permit. The cabin which they occupied had a kitchen in the middle, and a room at each end of it, in one of which was their own humble chaff bed, with its blue quilted druggert cover; in the other stood a couple of small tables, some stools, a short form, and one chair, being a present from his father-in-law. These constituted Peter's whole establishment, so far as it defied the gauger. To this we must add a five-gallon keg of spirits hid in the garden, and a roll of smuggled tobacco. From the former he bottled, over night, as much as was usually drank the following day; and from the tobacco, which was also kept under ground, he cut, with the same caution, as much as to-morrow's exigencies might require. This he kept in his coat pocket, a place where the gauger would never think of searching for it, divided into halfpenny and penny-worths, ounces or half-ounces, according as it might be required; and as he had it without duty, the liberal spirit in which he dealt it out to his neighbours soon brought him a large increase of custom.

Peter's wife was an excellent manager, and he himself a pleasant, good-humoured man, full of whim and inoffensive mirth. His powers of amusement were of a high order, considering his station in life and his want of education. These qualities contributed, in a great degree, to bring both the young and the old to his house during the long winter nights, in order to hear the fine racy humour with which he related his frequent adventures and battles with excisemen. In the summer evenings, he

* *Alanna dhas*—my pretty child.

† A kiss of fondness.

usually engaged a piper or fiddler, and had a dance, a contrivance by which he not only rendered himself popular, but increased his business.

In this mode of life, the greatest source of anxiety to Peter and Ellish was the difficulty of not offending their friends by refusing to give them credit. Many plans, were, with great skill and forethought, devised to obviate this evil; but all failed. A short board was first procured, on which they got written with chalk—

“No credit giv’n—barrin’ a thrifle to Pether’s friends.”

Before a week passed, after this intimation, the number of “Pether’s friends” increased so rapidly, that neither he nor Ellish knew the half of them. Every scamp in the parish was hand and glove with him: the drinking tribe, particularly, became desperately attached to him and Ellish. Peter was naturally kind-hearted, and found that his firmest resolutions too often gave way before the open flattery with which he was assailed. He then changed his hand, and left Ellish to bear the brunt of their blarney. Whenever any person or persons were seen approaching the house, Peter, if he had reason to suspect an attack upon his indulgence, prepared himself for a retreat. He kept his eye to the window, and if they turned from the direct line of the road, he immediately slipped into bed, and lay close in order to escape them. In the meantime they enter.

“God save all here! Ellish, agra machree, how are you?”

“God save you kindly! Faix, I’m middlin’, I thank you, Condý: how is yourself, an’ all at home?”

“Devil a heartier, barrin’ my father, that’s touched wid a loss of appetite afther his meals—ha, ha, ha!”

“Musha, the dickens be an you, Condý, but you’re your father’s son, any way; the best company in Europe is the same man. Throth, whether you’re jokin’ or not, I’d be sarry to hear of anything to his disadvantage, dacent man. Boys, won’t ye go down to the other room?”

“Go way wid yez, boys, till I spake to Ellish here about the affairs o’ the nation. Why, Ellish, you stand the cut all to pieces. By the contents o’ the book, you do; Pether doesn’t stand it half so well. How is he, the thief?”

“Throth, he’s not well to-day, in regard of a smotherin’ about the heart he tuck this mornin’ afther his breakfast. He jist laid himself on the bed a while, to see if it would go off of him—God be praised for all his marcies!”

“Thin, upon my solevation, I’m sarry to hear it, and so will all at home, for there’s not in the parish we’re sittin’ in a couple that our family has a greater regard an’ friendship for, than him an’ yourself. Faix, my modher, no longer ago than Friday night last, argued down Bartle Meegan’s throath, that you and Biddy Martin war the two portliest weemen that comes into the chapel. God forgive myself, I was near quarrellin’ wid Bartle, on the head of it, bekase I tuck my modher’s part, as I had good right to do.”

“Throth, I’m thankful to you both, Condý, for your kindness.”

“Oh, the sarra taste o’ kindness was in it at all, Ellish, ’twas only the truth; an’ as long as I live, I’ll stand up for that.”

"Arrah, how is your aunt down at Carnall?"

"Indeed thin but middlin', not gettin' her health: she 'll soon give the crow a puddin', any way; thin, Ellish, you thief, I'm *in* for the yallow boys. Do you know thim that came in wid me?"

"Why thin I can't say I do. Who are they, Condyl?"

"Why one o' them's a bachelor to my sisther Norah, a very dacent boy, indeed—him wid the frieze jock upon him, an' the buckskin breeches. The other three's from Teernabraighera beyant. They're related to my brother-in-law, Mick Dillon, by his first wife's brother-in-law's uncle. They're come to this neighbourhood till the 'Sizes, bad luck to them, goes over; for you see, they're in a little throuble."

"The Lord grant them safe out of it, poor boys!"

"I brought them up here to treat them, poor fellows; an', Ellish, avourneen, you must credit me for whatsoever we may have. The thruth is, you see, that when we left home, none of us had any notion of drinkin', or I'd a put somethin' in my pocket, so that I'm taken at an average.—Bud-an'-age! how is little Dan? Sowl, Ellish, that goorsoon, when he grows up, will be a credit to you. I don't think there's a finer child in Europe of his age, so there isn't."

"Indeed, he's a good child, Condyl. But, Condyl, about givin' credit:—by thim five crasses, if I could give score to any boy in the parish, it 'ud be to yourself. It was only last night that I made a promise against doin' sich a thing for man or mortal. We're a'most broken an' harrish'd out o' house an' home by it; an' what's more, Condyl, we intend to give up the business. The landlord's at us every day for his rint, an' we owe for the two last kegs we got, but hasn't a rap to meet either o' thim; an' enough due to us if we could get it together: an' whisper, Condyl, atween ourselves, that's what ails Pether, although he doesn't wish to let an to any one about it."

"Well, but you know I'm safe, Ellish?"

"I know you are, avourneen, as the bank itself; an' should have what you want wid a heart an' a half, only for the promise I made an my two knees last night, aginst givin' credit to man or woman. Why the dickens didn't you come yisterday?"

"Didn't I tell you, woman alive, that it was by accident, an' that I wished to sarve the house, that we came at all. Come, come, Ellish; don't disgrace me afore my sisther's bachelor an' the sthrane boys that's to the fore. By this staff in my hand, I wouldn't for the best cow in our byre be put to the blush afore thim; an' besides, there's a *cleveen* atween your family an' ours."

"Condyl, avourneen, say no more: if you were fed from the same breast wid me, I couldn't, nor wouldn't break my promise. I wouldn't have the sin of it an me for the wealth o' the three kingdoms."

"Bedad, you're a quare woman; an' only that my regard for you is great entirely, we would be two, Ellish; but I know you're dacent still."

He then left her, and joined his friends in the little room that was

* A kind of indirect relationship.

appropriated for drinking, where, with a great deal of mirth, he related the failure of the plan they had formed for outwitting Peter and Ellish.

"Boys," said he, "she's too many for us! St. Pether himself wouldn't make a hand of her. Faix, she's a cute one. I palavered her at the rate of a hunt, an' she ped me back in my own coin, wid dacent intherest—but no whisky!—Now to take a rise out o' Pether. Jist sit where ye are, till I come back."

He then left them enjoying the intended "spree," and went back to Ellish.

"Well, I'm sure, Ellish, if any one had tuck their book oath that you'd refuse my father's son sich a thrifle, I wouldn't believe them. It's not wid Pether's knowledge you do it, I'll be bound. But bad as you thrated us, sure we must see how the poor fellow is, at any rate."

As he spoke, and before Ellish had time to prevent him, he pressed into the room where Peter lay.

"Why, tare alive, Pether, is it in bed you are, at this hour o' the day?"

"Eh? Who's that—who's that? oh!"

"Why thin, the sarra lie undher you, is that the way wid you?"

"Oh!—oh! Eh? Is that Condý?"

"All that's to the fore of him. What's asthray wid you, man alive?"

"Throth, Condý, I don't know, rightly. I went out, wantin' my coat, about a week ago, an' got cowl'd in the small o' the back: I've a pain in it ever since. Be sittin'."

"Is your *heart* safe? You have no smotherin' or anything upon it?"

"Why thin, thank goodness, no; it's all about my back an' my hitches."

"Divil a thing it is but a complaint they call an *alloverness* ails you, you shkaimer o' the world wide. 'Tis the oil o' the hazel, or a rubbin' down wid an oak towel you want. Get up, I say, or, by this an' by that, I'll flail you widin an inch o' your life."

"Is it beside yourself you are, Condý?"

"No, no, faix; I've found you out: Ellish is afther tellin' me that it was a smotherin' on the heart; but it's a pain in the small o' the back wid *yourself*. Oh, you born desaver! Get up, I say agin, afore I take the stick to you!"

"Why thin, all sorts o' fortune to you, Condý—ha, ha, ha!—but you're the sarra's pet, for there's no escapin' you. What was that I hard atween you an' Ellish?" said Peter, getting up.

"The sarra matther to you. If you behave yourself, we may let you into the wrong side o' the sacret afore you die. Go an' get us a pint o' what you know," replied Condý, as he and Peter entered the kitchen.

"Ellish," said Peter, "I suppose we must give it to thim. Give it—give it, avourneen. Now, Condý, whin 'ill you pay me for this?"

"Never fret yourself about that; you'll be ped. Honour *bright*, as the black said whin he stole the boots."

"Now, Pether," said the wife, "sure it's no use axin' me to give it, afther the promise I made last night. Give it yourself; for me, I'll have no hand in sich things, good or bad. I hope we'll soon get out of it altogether, for myself's sick an' sore of it, dear knows!"

Peter accordingly furnished them with the liquor, and got a promise that Condy would certainly pay him at mass on the following Sunday, which was only three days distant. The fun of the boys was exuberant at Condy's success: they drank, and laughed, and sang, until pint after pint followed in rapid succession.

Every additional inroad upon the keg brought a fresh groan from Ellish; and even Peter himself began to look blank as their potations deepened. When the night was far advanced they departed, after having first overwhelmed Ellish with professions of the warmest friendship, promising that in future she exclusively should reap whatever benefit was to be derived from their patronage.

In the meantime Condy forgot to perform his promise. The next Sunday passed, but Peter was not paid, nor was his clever debtor seen at mass, or in the vicinity of the shebeen-house, for many a month afterwards—an instance of ingratitude which mortified his creditor extremely. The latter, who felt that it was a *take in*, resolved to cut short all hopes of obtaining credit from them in future. In about a week after the foregoing hoax, he got up a board, presenting a more vigorous refusal of *score* than the former. His friends, who were more in number than he could possibly have imagined, on this occasion, were altogether wiped out of the exception. The notice ran to the following effect:—

"Notice to the Public, and to *Pether Connell's friends in particular*.—Divil resave the morsel of credit will be got or given in this house, while there is stick or stone of it together, barrin' them that axes it has the *ready money*."

"PETHER X his mark CONNELL,
"ELLISH X her mark CONNELL."

This regulation, considering everything, was a very proper one. It occasioned much mirth among Peter's customers; but Peter cared little about that, provided he made the money.

The progress of his prosperity, dating it from so small a beginning, was certainly slow. He owed it principally to the careful habits of Ellish, and his own sobriety. He was prudent enough to avoid placing any sign in his window, by which his house could be known as a *shebeen*; for he was not ignorant that there is no class of men more learned in this species of hieroglyphics than excisemen. At all events, he was prepared for them, had they come to examine his premises. Nothing that could bring him within the law was ever kept visible. The cask that contained the *potteen* was seldom a week in the same place of concealment, which was mostly, as we have said, under ground. The tobacco was weighed and subdivided into small quantities, which, in addition to what he carried in his pocket, were distributed in various crevices and crannies of the house; sometimes under the thatch; sometimes under a dish on the dresser, but generally in a damp place.

When they had been about two or three years thus employed, Peter, at the solicitation of the wife, took a small farm.

"You're stout an' able," said she; "an' as I can manage the house widout you, wouldn't it be a good plan to take a bit o' ground—nine or ten acres, suppose—an' thry your hand at it? Sure you wor wantst the greatest man in the parish about a farm. Surely that 'ud be dacenter nor

to be *slungoin'* about, invintin' truth and lies for other people, whin they're at their work, to make thim laugh, an' you doin' nothin' but standin' over thim, wid your hands down to the bottom o' your pockets? Do, Pether, thry it, avick, an' you'll see it 'ill prosper wid us, plase God."

"Faix I'm ladin' an asier life, Ellish."

"But are you ladin' a dacenter or a more becominer life?"

"Why I think, widout doubt, that it's more becominer to walk about like a gintleman, nor to be workin' like a slave."

"Gintleman! Musha, is it to the fair you're bringin' yourself? Why, you great big bosthoon, isn't it both a sin an' a shame to see you sailin' about among the neighbours, like a shtray turkey, widout a hand's turn to do? But, any way, take my advice, a villish,—will you, aroon?—an' faix you'll see how rich we'll get, wid a blessin'?"

"Ellish, you're a deludher!"

"Well, an' what suppose? To be sure I am. Usen't you be fol-lowin' me, like a calf afther the finger?—ha, ha, ha!—Will you do my biddin', Pether darlin'?"

Peter gave her a shrewd, significant wink, in contradiction to what he considered the degrading comparison she had just made.

"Ellish, you're beside the mark, you beauty; always put the saddle on the right horse, woman alive! Didn't you often an' often swear to me, upon two green ribbons across one another, that you liked a red head best, an' that the redder it was you liked it the better?"

"An' it was thruth, too; an' sure, by the same a token, where could I get one half so red as your own? Faix, I knew what I was about! I wouldn't give you yet for e'er a young man in the parish, if I was a widow to-morrow. Will you take the land?"

"So thin, afther all, if the head hadn't been an me, I wouldn't be a favourite wid you?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Get out wid you, an' spake sinse. Throth if you don't say aither ay or no, I'll give myself no more bother about it. There we are now wid some guineas together, an'——Faix, Pether, you're vexin' me!"

"Do you want an answer?"

"Why, if it's plasin' to *your honour*, I'd have no objection."

"Well, will you have my new big coat made agin *Shraft*?" *

"Ay will I, in case you do what I say; but if you don't, the sarra stitch of it 'll go to your back this twelvemonth, maybe, if you vex me. Now!"

"Well, I'll tell you what: my mind's made up—I *will* take the land; an' I'll show the neighbours what Pether Connell can do yit."

"Augh! augh! mavourneen, that you wor! Throth I'll fry a bit o' the bacon for our dinner to-day, on the head o' that, although I didn't intind to touch it till Sunday. Ay, faix, an' a pair o' stockings, too, along wid the coat; an' somethin' else, that you didn't hear of yit."

Ellish, in fact, was a perfect mistress of the science of wheedling; but as it appears instinctive in the sex, this is not to be wondered at. Peter

* Shrovetide.

himself was easy, or rather indolent, till properly excited by the influence of adequate motives ; but no sooner were the energies that slumbered in him called into activity, than he displayed a firmness of purpose, and a perseverance in action, that amply repaid his exertions.

The first thing he did, after taking his little farm, was to prepare for its proper cultivation, and to stock it. His funds were not, however, sufficient for this at the time. A horse was to be bought, but the last guinea they could spare had been already expended, and this purchase was, therefore, out of the question. The usages of the small farmers, however, enabled him to remedy this inconvenience. Peter made a bargain with a neighbour, in which he undertook to repay him by an exchange of labour, for the use of his plough and horses in getting down his crop. He engaged to give him, for a stated period in the slack season, so many days' mowing as would cover the expenses of ploughing and harrowing his land. There was, however, a considerable portion of his holding potato-ground : this Peter himself dug with his spade, breaking it as he went along into fine mould. He then planted the seed—got a hatchet, and selecting the best thorn-bush he could find, cut it down, tied a rope to the trunk, seized the rope, and in this manner harrowed his potato-ground. Thus did he proceed, struggling to overcome difficulties by skill, and substituting for the more efficient modes of husbandry, such rude artificial resources as his want of capital compelled him to adopt.

In the meantime, Ellish, seeing Peter acquitting himself in his undertaking with such credit, determined not to be outdone in her own department. She accordingly conceived the design of extending her business, and widening the sphere of her exertions. This intention, however, she kept secret from Peter, until by putting penny to penny, and shilling to shilling, she was able to purchase a load of crockery. Here was a new source of profit opened exclusively by her own address. Peter was astonished when he saw the car unloaded, and the crockery piled in proud array by Ellish's own hands.

"I knew," said she, "I'd take a start out o' you. Faix, Pether, you'll see how I'll do, never fear, wid the help o' Heaven! I'll be off to the market in the mornin', plase God, where I'll sell rings round me* o' them crocks and pitchers. An' now, Pether, the sarra one o' me would do this, good or bad, only bekase your managin' the farm so cleverly. Tady Gormley's goin' to bring home his meal from the mill, and has promised to lave these in the market for me, an' never fear but I'll get some o' the neighbours to bring them home, so that there's car-hire saved. Faix, Pether, there's nothin' like givin' the people sweet words, any way ; sure they come chape."

"Faith, an' I'll back you for the sweet words agin any woman in the three kingdoms, Ellish, you darlin'. But don't you know the proverb, sweet words butther no parsnips."

"In throth the same proverb's a lyin' one, and ever was ; but it's not parsnips I'll butther wid 'em, you gommoach."

"Sowl, you butthered me wid 'em long enough, you deludher—devil a

* This is a kind of hyperbole for selling a great quantity.

lie in it; but thin, as you say, sure enough, I was no parsnip—not so soft as that either, you phanix.”

“No? Thin I seldom seen your beautiful head without thinkin’ of a carrot, an’ it’s well known they’re related—ha, ha, ha!—Behave, Pether—behave, I say—Pether, Pether—ha, ha, ha!—let me alone! Katty Hacket, take him away from me—ha, ha, ha!”

“Will ever you, you shaver wid the tongue that you are? Will ever you, I say? Will ever you make delusion to my head again—eh?”

“Oh, never, never—but let me go, an’ me so full o’ ticles! Oh, Pether, avourneen, don’t, you’ll hurt me, an’ the way I’m in—quit, avillish!”

“Bedad, if you don’t let my head alone, I’ll—will ever you?”

“Never, never, There now—ha, ha, ha!—oh, but I’m as wake as wather wid what I laughed. Well now, Pether, didn’t I manage bravely—didn’t I?”

“Wait till we see the profits first, Ellish—crockery’s very tindher goods.”

“Ay!—just wait, an’ I’ll engage, I’ll turn the penny, The family’s risin’ wid us”—

“Very thrue,” replied Peter, giving a sly wink at the wife—“no doubt of it.”

“—Risin’ wid us—I tell you to have sinse, Pether; an’ it’s our duty to have something for the crathurs when they grow up.”

“Well, that’s a thruth—sure I’m not sayin’ against it.”

“I know that; but what I say is, if we hould an, we may make money. Every thing, for so far, has thruv wid us, God be praised for it. There’s another thing in my mind, that I’ll be tellin’ you some o’ these days.”

“I believe, Ellish, you dhrame about makin’ money.”

“Well, an’ I might do worse; when I’m dhramin’ about it, I’m doin no sin to any one. But, listen, you must keep the house to-morrow while I’m at the market. Won’t you, Pether?”

“An’ who’s to open the dhrein in the bottom below?”

“That can be done the day afther. Won’t you, abouchal?”

“Ellish, you’re a deludher, I tell you. Sweet words;—sowl, you’d smooth a furze bush wid sweet words. How-an-ever, I *will* keep the house to-morrow, till we see the great things you’ll do wid your crockery.”

Ellish’s success was, to say the least of it, quite equal to her expectations. She was certainly an excellent wife, full of acuteness, industry, and enterprise. Had Peter been married to a woman of a disposition resembling his own, it is probable that he would have sunk into indolence, filth, and poverty. These miseries might have soured their tempers, and driven them into all the low excesses and crimes attendant upon pauperism. Ellish, however, had sufficient spirit to act upon Peter’s natural indolence, so as to excite it to the proper pitch. Her mode of operation was judiciously suited to his temper. Playfulness and kindness were the instruments by which she managed him. She knew that violence, or the assumption of authority, would cause a man who, like him, was stern when provoked, to re-act, and meet her with an assertion of his rights and authority not to be trifled with. This she consequently

avoided, not entirely from any train of reasoning on the subject; but from that intuitive penetration which taught her to know that the plan she had resorted to was best calculated to make him subservient to her own purposes without causing him to feel that he was governed.

Indeed, every day brought out her natural cleverness more clearly. Her intercourse with the world afforded her that facility of understanding the tempers and dispositions of others, which can never be acquired when it has not been bestowed as a natural gift. In her hands it was a valuable one. By degrees her house improved in its appearance, both inside and outside. From crockery she proceeded to herrings, then to salt, in each of which she dealt with surprising success. There was, too, such an air of bustle, activity, and good-humour about her that people loved to deal with her. Her appearance was striking, if not grotesque. She was tall and strong, walked rapidly, and when engaged in fair or market disposing of her coarse merchandise, was dressed in a short red petticoat, blue stockings, strong brogues, wore a blue cloak, with the hood turned up over her head, on the top of which was a man's hat fastened by a ribbon under her chin. As she thus stirred about, with a kind word and a joke for every one, her healthy cheek in full bloom, and her blue-grey eye beaming with an expression of fun and good-nature, it would be difficult to conceive a character more adapted for intercourse with a laughter-loving people. In fact, she soon became a favourite, and this not the less that she was as ready to meet her rivals in business with a blow as with a joke. Peter witnessed her success with unfeigned pleasure; and although every feasible speculation was proposed by her, yet he never felt that he was a mere nonentity when compared to his wife. 'Tis true, he was perfectly capable of executing her agricultural plans when she proposed them, but his own capacity for making a lucky hit was very limited. Of the two she was certainly the better farmer; and scarcely an improvement took place in his little holding, which might not be traced to Ellish.

In the course of a couple of years she bought him a horse, and Peter was enabled to join with a neighbour who had another. Each had a plough and tackle, so that here was a little team made up, the half of which belonged to Peter. By this means they ploughed week about, until their crops were got down. Peter finding his farm doing well, began to feel a kind of rivalry with his wife—that is to say, she first suggested the principle, and afterwards contrived to make him imagine that it was originally his own.

"The sarra one o' you, Pether," she exclaimed to him one day, "but's batin' me out an' out. Why, you're the very dickins at the farmin', so you are. Faix, I suppose, if you go an this way much longer, that you'll be thinkin' of another farm, in regard that we have some guineas together. Pether, did you ever think of it, abouchal?"

"To be sure, I did, you beauty; an' amn't I in fifty notions to take Harry Neal's land, that jist lies alongside of our own."

"Faix, an' you're right, maybe; but if it's sthrivin' agin me you are, you may give it over: I tell you, I'll have more money made afore this time twelvemonth than you will."

"Arrah, is it jokin' you are? More money? Would you advise me to take Harry's land? Tell me *that* first, you phanix, an' thin I'm your man!"

"Faix, take your own coorse, avourneen. If you get a lase of it at a fair rint, I'll buy another horse, any how. Isn't that doin' the thing dacent?"

"More power to you, Ellish! I'll hold you a crown, I pay you the price o' the horse afore this time twelvemonth."

"Done! The sarra be off me but done!—an' here's Barny Dillon an' Katty Hacket to bear witness."

"Sure enough we will," said Barny, the servant.

"I'll back the misthress any money," replied the maid.

"Two to one on the masther," said the man. "Whoo! our side o' the house for ever! Come, Pether, hould up your head, there's money bid for you!"

"Ellish, I'll fight for you ancle deep," said Katty—"depind your life an me."

"In the name o' goodness, thin, it's a bargain," said Ellish; "an' at the end o' the year, if we're spared, we'll see what we'll see. We'll have among ourselves a little sup o' tay, plase goodness, an' we'll be comfortable. Now, Barny, go an' draw home thim phaties from the pits while the day's fine; and Katty, a colleen, bring in some wather, till we get the pig killed and scalded—it'll hardly have time to be good bacon for the big markets at Christmas. I don't wish," she continued, "to keep it back from them that we have a thrifle o' money. One always does bettther when it's known that they're not strugglin'. There's Nelly Cummins, an' her customers is lavin' her, an' dalin' wid me, bekase she's goin' down in business. Ay, an', Pether, a hatur, it's the way o' the world."

"Well but, Ellish, don't you be givin' Nelly Cummins the harsh word, or lanin' too heavily upon her, the crathur, merely in regard that she *is* goin' down. Do you hear, a colleen?"

"Indeed I don't do it, Pether; but you know she has a tongue like a razor at times, and whin it gets loose she'd provoke St. Pether himself. Thin she's takin' to the dhrink, too, the poor misfortunate vagabone!"

"Well, well, that's no affair o' yours, or mine aither—only don't be risin' ructions and norrations wid her. You *throw* a jug at her the last day you war out, an' hot the poor ould Potticary as he was passin'. You see I hard that, though you kept it close from me!—ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!—why you'd split if you had seen the crathur whin he fell into Pether White's brogue-creels, wid his heels up. But what right had she to be shtrivin' to bring away my customers afore my face? Ailey Dogherty was buying a crock wid me, and Nelly shouts over to her from where she sot like a queen on her stool, 'Ailey,' says she, 'here's a bettther one for three fardens less, an' another farden 'ill get you a pen-north o' salt.' An', indeed, Ailey walks over, manely enough, an' tuck her at her word. Why, flesh an' blood couldn't bear it."

"Indeed, an' you're raal flesh an' blood, Ellish, if that's thrue."

"Well, but consarnin' what I mintioned awhile ago—hut! the poor mad crathur, let us have no more discourse about her—I say, that no one ever thrives so well as when the world sees that they are gettin' an, an'

prosperin'; but if there's not an appearance, how will any one know whether we are prosperin' or not, barrin' they see some sign of it about us; I mane, in a quiet rasonable way, widout show or extravagance. In the name o' goodness, thin, let us get the house brushed up, an' the outhouses dashed. A bushel or two of lime 'ill make this as white as an egg widin, an' a very small expinse will get it plastered and whitewashed widout. Wouldn't you like it, avoureen? Eh, Pether?"

"To be sure I'd like it. It 'll give a respectful look to the house and place."

"Ay, an' it 'll bring customers, that's the main thing. People always like to come to a snug comfortable place. An', plase God, I'm thinking of another plan that I'll soon mintion."

"An' what may that be, you skamer? Why, Ellish, you've ever an' always some skame or other in that head o' yours. For my part, I don't know how you get at them."

"Well, no matter, acushla, do you only back me; jist show me how I ought to go on wid them, for nobody can outdo you at such things, an' I'll engage we'll thrive yit, always wid a blessin' an us."

"Why, to tell God's thruth, I'd bate the devil himself at plannin' out, an' bringin' a thing to a conclusion—eh, you deludher?"

"The sarra doubt of it; but takin' the other farm was the brightest thought I seen wid you yit. Will you do it, avillish?"

"To be sure, Don't I say it? An' it'll be up wid the lark wid me. Hut, woman, you don't see the half o' what's in me, yet."

"I'll buy you a hat and a pair o' stockins at Christmas."

"Will you, Ellish? Then, by the book, I'll work like a horse."

"I didn't intind to tell you, but I had it laid out for you."

"Faith, you're a beauty, Ellish. What 'll we call this young chap that's comin', acushla?"

"Now, Pether, none o' your capers. It's time enough when the thing happens to be thinkin' o' that, glory be to God!"

"Well, you may talk as you plase, but I'll call him Pether."

"An' how do you know but he'll be a girl, you omadhawn?"

"Murdher alive, ay, sure enough! Faith I didn't think o' that!"

"Well, go up now an' spake to Misther Eccles about the land; maybe somebody else 'ud slip in afore us, an' that wouldn't be pleasant. Here's your brave big coat, put it an; faix, it makes a man of you—gives you a *bodagh** look entirely: but that's little to what you'll be yet, wid a blessin'—a Half Sir, any way."

In fact, Ellish's industry had already gained a character for both herself and her husband. He got credit for the assiduity and activity to which she trained him: and both were respected for their cleverness in advancing themselves from so poor a beginning, to the humble state of

* This word is used in Ireland sometimes in a good and sometimes in a bad sense. For instance, the peasantry will often say in allusion to some individual who may happen to be talked of, "Hut! he's a dirty *bodagh*;" but again, you may hear them use it in a sense directly the reverse of this; for instance, "He's a very dacent man, and looks the *bodagh* entirely." As to the "Half Sir," he stands about half-way between the *bodagh* and the gentleman. *Bodagh*—signifying churl—was applied originally as a term of reproach to the English settlers.

independence they had then reached. The farm which Ellish was so anxious to secure was the property of the gentleman from whom they held the other. Being a man of sense and penetration, he fortunately saw—what, indeed, was generally well known—that Peter and Ellish were rising in the world, and that their elevation was the consequence of their own unceasing efforts to become independent, so that industry is in every possible point of view its own reward. So long as the farm was open to competition, the offers for it multiplied prodigiously, and rose in equal proportion. Persons not worth twenty shillings in the world, offered double the rent which the utmost stretch of ingenuity, even with suitable capital, could pay. New-married couples, with nothing but the strong imaginative hopes peculiar to their country, proposed for it in a most liberal spirit. Men who had been ejected out of their late farms for non-payment of rent, were ready to cultivate this at a rent much above that which, on better land, they were unable to pay. Others, who had been ejected from farm after farm—each of which they undertook as a mere speculation, to furnish them with present subsistence, but without any ultimate expectation of being able to meet their engagements—came forward with the most laudable efforts. This gentleman, however, was none of those landlords who are so besotted and ignorant of their own interests, as to let their lands simply to the highest bidders, without taking into consideration their capital, moral character, and habits of industry. He resided at home, knew his tenants personally, took an interest in their successes and difficulties, and instructed them in the best modes of improving their farms.

Peter's first interview with him was not quite satisfactory on either side. The honest man was like a ship without her rudder, when transacting business in the absence of his wife. The fact was, that on seeing the high proposals which were sent in, he became alarmed lest, as he flattered himself, that the credit of the transaction should be all his own, the farm might go into the hands of another, and his character for cleverness suffer with Ellish. The landlord was somewhat astounded at the rent which a man who bore so high a name for prudence offered him. He knew it was considerably beyond what the land was worth, and he did not wish that any tenant coming upon his estate should have no other prospect than that of gradually receding into insolvency.

"I cannot give you any answer now," said he to Peter; "but if you will call in a day or two I shall let you know my final determination."

Peter, on coming home, rendered an account of his interview with the landlord to his wife, who no sooner heard of the extravagant proposal he made, than she raised her hands and eyes, exclaiming—

"Why thin, Pether, a lanna, was it beside yourself you wor, to go for to offer a rint that no one could honestly pay! Why, man alive, it 'ud lave us widout house or home in no time, all out! Sure Pether, a cushla, where 'ud be the use of us or any one takin' land, barrin' they could make somethin' by it? Faix, if the gentleman had sinse, he wouldn't give the same farm to anybody at sich a rint; an' for good rasons too—bekase they could never pay it, an himself 'ud be the sufferer in the long run."

"Dang me, but you're the long-headedest woman alive this day,

Ellish. Why, I never wanst wint into the rason o' the thing, at all. But you don't know the offers he got."

"Don't I? Why do you think he'd let the Mullins, or the Conlans, or the O'Donoghoes, or the Duffys, upon his land, widout a shillin' in one o' their pockets to stock it, or to begin workin' it properly wid. Hand me my cloak from the pin there, an' get your hat. Katty, avourneen, have an eye to the house till we come back; an' if Dick Murphy comes here to get tobaccy on score, tell him I can't afford it, till he pays up what he got. Come, Pether, in the name o' goodness—come, a bouchal."

Ellish, during their short journey to the landlord's, commenced, in her own way, a lecture upon agricultural economy, which, though plain and unvarnished, contained excellent and practical sense. She also pointed out to him when to speak and when to be silent; told him what rent to offer, and in what manner he should offer it; but she did all this so dexterously and sweetly, that honest Peter thought the new and corrected views which she furnished him with, were altogether the result of his own penetration.

The landlord was at home when they arrived, and ordered them into the parlour, where he soon made his appearance.

"Well, Connell," said he, smiling, "are you come to make me a *higher* offer?"

"Why thin no, plase your honour," replied Peter, looking for confidence to Ellish: "instead o' that, sir, Ellish here"——

"Never heed me, a lanna; tell his honour what you've to say, out o' the face. Go an, acushla."

"Why, your honour, to tell the blessed thruth, the dickens a bit o' myself but had a sup in my head when I wid your honour to-day before."

Ellish was thunderstruck at this most unexpected apology from Peter; but the fact was, that the instructions which she had given him on their way had completely evaporated from his brain, and he felt himself thrown altogether upon his own powers of invention. Here, however, he was at home; for it was well known among all his acquaintances, that, however he might be deficient in the management of a family when compared to his wife, he was capable, notwithstanding, of exerting a certain imaginative faculty in a very high degree. Ellish felt that to contradict him on the spot must lessen both him and herself in the opinion of the landlord, a circumstance that would have given her much pain.

"I'm sorry to hear that, Connell," said Mr. Eccles; "you bear the character of being strictly sober in your habits. You must have been early at the bottle, too, which makes your apology rather unhappy. Of all tipplers, he who drinks early is the worst and most incurable."

"Thru for you, sir, but this only happens me wanst a year, your honour."

"Once a year! But, by the by, you had no appearance of being tipsy, Peter."

"Tippy! Bud-a'-age, your honour, I was never seen tipsy in all my life," said Peter.—"That's a horse of another colour, sir, plase your honour"

The reader must at once perceive that Peter here was only recovering himself from the effects of the injurious impression which his first admission was calculated to produce against him in the mind of his landlord.

"Tipsy! No, no, sir; but the rason of it, sir, was this: it bein' my birthday, sir, I merely tuck a sup in the mornin', in honour o' the day. It's altogether a lucky day to me, sir!"

"Why, to be sure, every man's birthday may, probably, be called such—the gift of existence being, I fear, too much undervalued."

"Bedad, your honour, I don't mane that, at all."

"Then what *do* you mean, Peter?"

"Why, sir, you see, it's not that I was *entirely* born on this day, but *partly*, sir; I was marrid to Ellish here into the bargain,—one o' the best wives, sir—however, I'll say no more, as she's to the fore herself. But, death alive, sir, sure when we put both conclusions together—myself bein' sich a worthy man, and Ellish such a tip-top wife, who could blame me for smellin' the bottle?—for divil a much more I did—about two glasses, sir—an' so it got up into my head a little when I was wid your honour to-day before."

"But what is the amount of all this, Peter?"

"Why, sir, you see only I was as I said, sir—not tipsy, your honour, any way, but seein' things double or so; an' that was, I suppose, what made me offer for the farm double what I intinded. Every body knows, sir, that the 'crathur' gives the big heart to us, any how, your honour."

"But you know, Peter, we entered into no terms about it. I, therefore, have neither power nor inclination to hold you to the offer you made."

"Faith, sir, you're not the gentleman to do a shabby turn, nor ever was, nor one o' your family. There's not in all Europe!"

Ellish, who was a point blank dealer, could endure Peter's mode of transacting business no longer. She knew that if he once got into the true spirit of applying the oil of flattery to the landlord, he would have rubbed him into a perfect froth ere he quitted him. She, therefore, took up the thread of the discourse, and finished the compliment with much more delicacy than honest Peter could have displayed.

"Thru for you, Pether," she added; "there is not a kinder family to the poor, nor bether landlords, in the country they live in. Pether an' myself, your honour, on layin' both our heads together, found that he offered more rint for the land nor any tenant could honestly pay. So, sir, where's the use of keepin' back God's thruth—Pether, sir?"

Peter here trembled from an apprehension that the wife, in accomplishing some object of her own in reference to the land, was about to deceive the landlord, touching the lie which he had so barefacedly palmed upon that worthy gentleman for truth. In fact, his anxiety overcame his prudence, and he resolved to anticipate her.

"I'd advise you, sir," said he, with a smile of significant good-humour, "to be a little suspicious of her, for, to tell the thruth, she draws the"—here he illustrated the simile with his staff—"the long bow of an odd time; faith she does. I'd kiss the book on the head of what I tould you,

sir, plase your honour. For the sacret of it is, that I tuck the moisture afore she left her bed."

"Why, Peter, alanna," said Ellish, soothingly, "what's comin' over you, at all, an' me goin' to explain to his honour the outs and ins of our opinion about the land? Faix, man, we're not thinkin' about you, good or bad."

"I believe the drop has scarcely left your head yet, Peter," said the landlord.

"Bud-an'-age, your honour, sure we must have our joke, any how—doesn't she deserve it for takin' the word out o' my mouth?"

"Whisht, a villish; you're too cute for us all, Pether. There's no use, sir, as I was sayin', for any one to deny that when they take a farm they do it to make by it, or at the laste to live comfortably an it. That's the thruth, your honour, an' it's no use to keep it back from you, sir."

"I perfectly agree with you," said the landlord. "It is with these motives that a tenant should wish to occupy land; and it is the duty of every landlord who has his own interest truly at heart, to see that his land be not let at such a rent as will preclude the possibility of comfort or independence on the part of his tenantry. He who lets his land *above* its value, merely because people are foolish enough to offer more for it than it is worth, is as great an enemy to himself as he is to the tenant."

"It's God's thruth, sir, an' it's nothin' else but a comfort to hear sich words comin' from the lips of a gentleman that's a landlord himself."

"Ay, an' a good one, too," said Peter; "an' kind father for his honour to be what he is. Divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Thru for you, avourneen, an' every one knows that. We wor talkin' it over, sir, betuxt ourselves, Pether an' me, an' he says very cutely, that, upon second thoughts, he offered more nor we could honestly pay out o' the land; so"—

"Faith, it's as thru as gospel, your honour. Says I, 'Ellish, you beauty'"—

"I thought," observed Mr. Eccles, "that she sometimes drew the long bow, Peter."

"Oh, murdher alive, sir, it was only in regard of her crassin' in an' whippin' the word out o' my mouth, that I wanted to take a rise out of her. Oh, bedad, sir, no; the crathur's thruth to the backbone, an' farther if I'd say it."

"So, your honour, considherin' everything, we're willin' to offer thirty shillins an acre for the farm. That rint, sir, we'll be able to pay, wid the help o' God, for sure we can do nothin' widout his assistance, glory be to his name! You'll get many that'll offer you more, your honour; but if it 'ud be plasin' to you to considher what manes they have to pay it, I think, sir, you'd see, out o' your own sinse, that it's not likely people who is gone to the bad, an' has nothin' could stand it out long."

"I wish to heaven," replied Mr. Eccles, "that every tenant in Ireland possessed your prudence and good sense. Will you permit me to ask, Mrs. Connell, what capital you and your husband can command provided I should let you have it."

"Wid every pleasure in life, sir, for it's but a fair question to put.

An' sure, it is to God we owe it, whatever it is, plase your honour. But, sir, if we get the land, we're able to stock it, an' to crop it well an' dacently; an' if your honour would allow us for sartin improvements, sir, we'd run it into snug fields, by plantin' good hedges, an' gettin' up shelter for the outlyin' cattle in the hard seasons, plase your honour, and you know the farm is very naked and bare of shelter at present."

"Sowl, will we, sir, an' far more nor that, if we get it. I'll undher-take, sir, to level"—

"No, Pether, we'll promise no more nor we'll do; but anything that his honour will be plased to point out to us, if we get fair support, an' that it remains on the farm afther us, we'll be willin' to do it."

"Willin'!" exclaimed Peter;—"faith, whether we're willin' or not, it is his honour but says the word"—

"Mrs. Connell," said their landlord, "say no more. The farm is yours, and you may consider yourselves as my tenants."

"Many thanks to you, sir, for the priference. I hope, sir, you'll not rue what you did in givin' it to us before them that offered a higher rint. You'll find, sir, wid the help o' the Almighty, that we'll pay you your rint rigular an' punctual."

"Why, thin, long life, an' glory, an' benediction to your honour! Faith it's only kind father for you, sir, to be what you are. The divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Peter, that will do," replied the landlord; "it would be rather hazardous for our family to compete with all Europe. Go home, Peter, and be guided by your wife, who has more sense in her little finger than ever your family had either in Europe or out of it, although I mean you no offence by going *beyond* Europe."

"By all the books that never wor opened an' shut," replied Peter, with the intuitive quickness of perception peculiar to Irishmen, "an innocent boy than Andy Connell never was sent across the water. I proved as clear an *alibi* for him as the sun in the firmanent; an' yit, bad luck to the big-wig O'Grady, he should be puttin' in his leek an me afore the jury, jist whin I had the poor boy cleared out dacently, an' wid all honour. An' bedad, now, that we're spakin' about it, I'll tell your honour the whole conclusions of it. You see, sir, the Agint was shot one night; an' above all nights in the year, your honour, a thief of a toothbach that I had kep me"—

"Pether, come away, a bouchal: his honour knows as much about it as you do. Come, aroon; you know we must help to scald an' scrape the pig afore night, an' it's late now."

"Bedad, sir, she's a sweet one, this."

"Be guided by her, Peter, if you're wise: she's a wife you ought to be proud of."

"Thru for you, sir; divil resave the word o' lie in that, any how. Come, Ellish; come, you deludher, I'm wid you."

"God bless your honour, sir, an' we're obliged to you for your kindness an' patience wid the likes o' us."

"I say ditto, your honour. Long life an' glory to you every day your honour rises!"

Peter, on his way home, entered into a defence of his apology for offering so high a rent to the landlord ; but although it possessed both ingenuity and originality, it was, we must confess, grossly defective in those principles usually inculcated by our best Ethic writers.

" Couldn't you have tould him what we agreed upon goin' up," observed Ellish ; " but instead o' that, to begin an' tell the gentleman so many lies about your bein' dhrunk, an' this bein' your birth-day, an' the day we wor marrid, an',—Musha, sich quare stories to come into your head !"

" Why," said Peter, " what harm's in all that, whin he didn't *find me out* ?"

" But why the sarra did you go to say that *I* was in the custom o' tellin' lies ?"

" Faix, bekase I thought you wor goin' to let out all, an' I thought it best to have the first word o' you. What else ?—but sure I brought myself off bravely."

" Well, well, a hudh ; don't be invitin' sich things another time, or you'll bring yourself into a scrape, some way or other."

" Faix, an' *you* needn't spake Ellish ; you can let out a nate bounce yourself, whin it's to sarve you. Come now, don't run away wid the story !"

" Well, if I do, it's in the way o' my business ; whin I'm batin' thim down in the price o' what I'm buyin', or gettin' thim to bid up for any thing I'm sellin' : besides, it's to advance ourselves in the world, that I do it, a bouchal."

" Go an, go an ; faix, you're like the new moon, sharp at both corners : but what matter, you beauty, we've secured the farm, at any rate, an', by this an' by that, I'll show you tip-top farmin' an it."

A struggle now commenced between the husband and wife, as to which of them should, in their respective departments, advance themselves with greater rapidity in life. This friendly contest was kept up principally by the address of Ellish, who, as she knew those points in her husband's character most easily wrought upon, felt little difficulty in shaping him to her own purposes. Her great object was to acquire wealth ; and it mostly happens, that when this is the ruling principle in life, there is usually to be found, in association with it, all those qualities which are best adapted to secure it. Peter, on finding that every succeeding day brought something to their gains, began to imbibe a portion of that spirit which wholly absorbed Ellish. He became worldly ; but it was rather the worldliness of habit than of principle. In the case of Ellish, it proceeded from both ; her mind was apt, vigorous, and conceptive ; her body active, her manners bland and insinuating, and her penetration almost intuitive. About the time of their entering upon the second farm, four children had been the fruit of their marriage—two sons and two daughters. These were now new sources of anxiety to their mother, and fresh impulses to her industry. Her ignorance, and that of her husband, of any kind of education, she had often, in the course of their business, bitter cause to regret. She now resolved that their children should be well instructed ; and no time was lost in sending them to school, the

moment she thought them capable of imbibing the simplest elements of instruction.

"It's hard to say," she observed to her husband, "how soon they may be useful to us. Who knows, Pether, but we may have a full shop yit, an' they may be able to make up bits of accounts for us, poor things? Throth, I'd be happy if I wanst seen it."

"Faix, Ellish," replied Peter, "if we can get an as we're doin', it is hard to say. For my own part, if I had got the larnin' in time, I might be a bright boy to-day, no doubt of it—could spake up to the best o' thim. I never wint to school but wanst, an' I remember I threwn the masher into a kiln-pot, an' broke the poor craythur's arm; an' from that day to this, I never could be brought a single day to school."

Peter and Ellish now began to be pointed out as a couple worthy of imitation by those who knew that perseverance and industry never fail of securing their own reward. Others, however,—that is to say, the lazy, the profligate, and the ignorant,—had a ready solution for the secret of their success.

"Oh, my dear, she's a *lucky* woman, an' anything she puts her hand to prospers. Sure she was born wid a *lucky caul** an' her head; an', be sure, a hagur, the world will flow in upon thim. There's many a neighbour about thim works their fingers to the stumps, an' yit you see they can't get an: for Ellish, if she'd throw the sweepins of her hearth to the wind, it 'ud come back to her in money. *She was born to it, an' nothin' can keep her from her luck!*"†

Such are many of the senseless theories that militate against exertion and industry in Ireland, and occasion many to shrink back from the laudable race of honest enterprise, into filth, penury, and crime. It is this idle and envious crew, who, with a natural aversion to domestic industry, become adepts in politics, and active in those illegal combinations and outrages which retard the prosperity of the country, and bring disgrace upon the great body of its peaceable inhabitants.

In the meantime Ellish was rapidly advancing in life, while such

* The caul is a thin membrane, about the consistence of very fine silk, which sometimes covers the head of a new-born infant like a cap. It is always the omen of great good fortune to the infant and parents; and in Ireland, when any one has unexpectedly fallen into the receipt of property, or any other temporal good, it is customary to say, "such a person was born with a 'lucky caul' on his head."

Why these are considered lucky, it would be a very difficult matter to ascertain. Several instances of good fortune, happening to such as were born with them, might by their coincidences, form a basis for the superstition; just as the fact of three men during one severe winter having been found drowned, each with two shirts on, generated an opinion which has now become fixed and general in that parish, that it is unlucky to wear two shirts at once. We are not certain whether the caul is in general the perquisite of the midwife—sometimes we believe it is; at all events, her integrity occasionally yields to the desire of possessing it. In many cases she conceals its existence, in order that she may secretly dispose of it to good advantage, which she frequently does; for it is considered to be the herald of good fortune to those who can get it into their possession. Now, let not our English neighbours smile at us for those things until they wash their own hands clear of such practices. At this day a caul will bring a good price in the most civilised city in the world—to wit, the good city of London—the British metropolis. Nay, to such lengths has the mania for cauls been carried there, that they have been actually advertised for in the *Times* newspaper.

† This doctrine of fatalism is very prevalent among the lower orders in Ireland.

persons were absurdly speculating upon the cause of her success. Her business was not only increased, but extended. From crockery, herrings, and salt, she advanced gradually to deal in other branches adapted to her station, and the wants of the people. She bought stockings, and retailed them every market-day. By and by a few pieces of soap might be seen in her windows: starch, blue, potash, and candles, were equally profitable. Pipes were seen stuck across each other, flanked by tape, cakes, children's books, thimbles, and bread. In fact, she was equally clever and expert in whatever she undertook. The consciousness of this, and her reputation as being "a hard honest woman," encouraged her to get a cask or two of beer, and a few rolls of tobacco. Peter, when she proposed the two last, consented only to sell them still as smuggled goods—*sub silentio*. With her usual prudence, however, she declined this.

"We have gone on that way purty far," she replied, "an' never *got a touch*,* thanks to the kindness o' the neighbours that never informed an us; but now, Pether, that we're *able*, we had better do everything above board. You know the ould say, 'long runs the fox, but he's caught at last;' so let us give up in time, an' get out a little bit o' licence."

"I don't like that at all," replied Peter; "I can't warm my heart to the licence. I'll back you in anything but that. The gauger won't come next or near us: he has thried it often, an' never made anything of it. Dang me, but I'd like to have a bit o' fun with the gauger, to see if my hand's still ready for practice."

"Oh, thin, Pether, how can you talk that way, ashore? Now if what I'm sayin' was left to yourself wouldn't you be apt to plan it as I'm doin'?—wouldn't you, acushla? Throth, I know you're too cute an' sinsible not to do it."

"Why thin, do you know what, Ellish—although I didn't spake out, upon my faix I was thinkin' of it. Divil a word o' lie in it."

"Oh, you thief o' the world, an' never to tell it to me. Faix, Pether, you're a cunnin' shaver, an' as deep as a draw well."

"Let me alone. Why I tell you if I study an' lay myself down to it, I can conthrive anything. Whin I was young, many a time my poor father, God be good to him! said that if there was any possibility of gettin' me to take to larnin', I'd be risin' out o' the ashes every mornin' like a phanix."

"But won't you hould to your plan about the licence?"

"Hould! To be sure I will. What was I but takin' a rise out o' you. I intinded it this good while, you phanix—faix, I did."

In this manner did Ellish dupe her own husband into increasing wealth. Their business soon became so extensive, that a larger house was absolutely necessary. To leave that, beneath whose roof she succeeded so well in all her speculations, was a point—be it of prudence or of prejudice—which Ellish could not overcome. Her maxim was, wherever you find yourself doing well, stay there. She contrived, however, to remedy this. To the old house additional apartments were, from time to time, added, into which their business soon extended. When these again be-

* Never suffered by the exciseman.

came too small, others were also built; so that in the course of about twenty years, their premises were so extensive, that the original shebeen-house constituted a very small portion of Peter's residence. Peter, during Ellish's progress within doors, had not been idle without. For every new room added to the house, he was able to hook in a fresh farm in addition to those he had already occupied. Unexpected success had fixed his heart as strongly upon the accumulation of money, and the pride of rising in the world, as it was possible for a man, to whom they were only adventitious feelings, to experience. The points of view in which he and his wife were contemplated by the little public about them were peculiar, but clearly distinct. The wife was generally esteemed for her talents and incessant application to business; but she was not so cordially liked as Peter. He, on the other hand, though less esteemed, was more beloved by all their acquaintances than Ellish. This might probably originate from the more obvious congeniality which existed between Peter's natural disposition, and the national character; for with the latter, Ellish, except good humour, had little in common.

The usual remarks upon both were—"she would buy an' sell him"—" 'twas she that made a man of him; but for all that, Pether's worth a ship-load of her, if she'd give him his own way." That is, if she would permit him to drink with the neighbours, to be idle and extravagant.

Every year, now that their capital was extending, added more perceptibly to their independence. Ellish's experience in the humbler kinds of business, trained her for a higher line; just as boys at school rise from one form to another. She made no plunges, nor permitted Peter, who was often inclined to jump at conclusions, to make any. Her elevation was gradual and cautious; for her plans were always so seasonable and simple, that every new description of business, and every new success, seemed to arise naturally from that which went before it.

Having once taken out a license, their house soon became a decent country spirit establishment; from soap, and candles, and tobacco, she rose into the full sweep of groceries; and from dealing in Connemara stockings and tape, she proceeded in due time to sell woollen and linen drapery. Her crockery was now metamorphosed into delf, pottery, and hardware; her gingerbread into stout loaves, for as Peter himself grew wheat largely, she seized the opportunity presented by the death of the only good baker in the neighbourhood, of opening an extensive bakery.

It may be asked, how two illiterate persons, like Peter and Ellish, could conduct business in which so much calculation was necessary, without suffering severely by their liability to make mistakes. To this we reply—first, that we should have liked to see any person attempting to pass a bad note or a light guinea upon Ellish after nine or ten years' experience; we should like to have seen a smug clerk taking his pen from behind his ear, and after making his calculation, on inquiring from Ellish if she had reckoned up the amount, compelled to ascertain the error which she pointed out to him. The most remarkable point in her whole character, was the rapid accuracy she displayed in mental calculation, and her uncommon sagacity in detecting bad money.

There is, however, a still more satisfactory explanation of this circum-

stance to be given. She had not neglected the education of her children. The eldest was now an intelligent boy, and a smart accountant, who, thanks to his master, had been taught to keep their books by Double Entry. The second was little inferior to him as a clerk, though as a general dealer he was far his superior. The eldest had been principally behind the counter; whilst the younger, in accompanying his mother in all her transactions and bargain-making, had in a great measure imbibed her address and tact.

It is certainly a pleasing, and, we think, an interesting thing, to contemplate the enterprise of an humble, but active, shrewd woman, enabling her to rise, step by step, from the lowest state of poverty to a small sense of independence; from this, by calling fresh powers into action, taking wider views, and following them up by increased efforts, until her she-been becomes a small country public-house; until her roll of tobacco, and her few pounds of soap and starch, are lost in the well-filled drawers of a grocery shop; and her grey Connemara stockings transformed by the golden wand of industry, into a country cloth warehouse. To see Peter—from the time when he first harrowed part of his farm with a thorn-bush, and ploughed it by joining his horse to that of a neighbour—adding farm to farm, horse to horse, and cart to cart, until we find him a wealthy and extensive agriculturist.

The progress of Peter and Ellish was in another point of view a good study for him who wishes to look into human nature, whilst adapting itself to the circumstances through which it passes. When this couple began life, their friends and acquaintances were as poor as themselves; as they advanced from one gradation to another, and rose up from a lower to a higher state, their former friends, who remained in their original poverty, found themselves left behind in cordiality and intimacy, as well as in circumstances; whilst the subjects of our sketch continued to make new friendships of a more respectable stamp, to fill up, as it were, the places held in their good will by their humble, but neglected, intimates. Let not our readers, however, condemn them for this. It was the act of society, and not of Peter and Ellish. On their parts, it was involuntary; their circumstances raised them, and they were compelled, of course, to rise with their circumstances. They were passing through the journey of life, as it were, and those with whom they set out, not having been able to keep up with them, soon lost their companionship, which was given to those with whom they travelled for the time being. Society is always ready to reward the enterprising and industrious by its just honours, whether they are sought or not; it is so disposed, that every man falls or rises into his proper place in it, and that by the wisdom and harmony of its structure. The rake, who dissipates by profligacy and extravagance that which might have secured him an honourable place in life, is eventually brought to the work-house; whilst the active citizen, who realises an honest independence, is viewed with honour and esteem.

Peter and Ellish were now people of consequence in the parish; the former had ceased to do anything more than superintend the cultivation of his farms; the latter still took an active part in her own business, or rather in the various departments of business which she carried on. Peter

might be seen the first man abroad in the morning proceeding to some of his farms mounted upon a good horse, comfortably dressed in top boots, stout corduroy breeches, buff cashmere waistcoat, and blue broad-cloth coat, to which in winter was added, a strong frieze great-coat, with a drab velvet collar, and a glazed hat. Ellish was also respectably dressed, but still considerably under her circumstances. Her mode of travelling to fairs or markets was either upon a common car, covered with a feather bed and quilt, or behind Peter upon a pillion. This last method flattered Peter's vanity very much; no man could ride on these occasions with a statelier air. He kept himself as erect and stiff as a poker, and brandished the thong of his loaded whip, with the pride of a gentleman farmer.

'Tis true, he did not always hear the sarcastic remarks which were passed upon him by those who witnessed his good-natured vanity :

"There he goes," some labouring man on the wayside would exclaim, "a purse-proud *bodagh* upon our hands. Why, thin, does he forget that we remimber when he kept the shebeen-house, an' sould his smuggled tobaccy in *gits** out of his pocket, for fraid o' the gauger! Sowl, he'd show a blue nose, any way, only for the wife—'Twas she made a man of him."

"Faith, an' I, for one, won't hear Pether Connell run down," his companion would reply; "he's a good-hearted, honest man, an' obligin' enough; an' for that matter so is the wife, a hard honest woman, that made what they have, an' brought herself an' her husband from nothin' to somethin'."

"Thru for you, Tim; in troth they *do* desarve credit. Still, you see, here's you an' me, an' we've both been slavin' ourselves as much as they have, an' yet you see how we are! However, *it's their luck*, an' there's no use in begrudgin' it to them."

When their children were full grown, the mother did not, as might have been supposed, prevent them from making a respectable appearance. With excellent judgment, she tempered their dress, circumstances, and prospects so well together, that the family presented an admirable display of economy, and a decent sense of independence. From the moment they were able to furnish solid proofs of their ability to give a comfortable dinner occasionally, the priest of the parish began to notice them; and this new intimacy, warmed by the honour conferred on one side, and by the good dinners on the other, ripened into a strong friendship. For many a long year, neither Peter nor Ellish, God forgive them, ever troubled themselves about going to their duty. They soon became, however, persons of too much importance to be damned without an effort made for their salvation. The worthy gentleman accordingly addressed them on the subject, and as the matter was one of perfect indifference to both, they had not the slightest hesitation to go to confession—in compliment to the priest. We do not blame the priest for this; God forbid that we should quarrel with a man for loving a good dinner. If we ourselves were a priest, it is very probable—nay, from the zest with which we approach a good dinner, it is quite certain—that we would have cultivated honest

* Gits—the smallest possible quantities.

Peter's acquaintance, and drawn him out to the practice of that most social of virtues—hospitality. The salvation of such a man's soul was worth looking after; and, indeed, we find a much warmer interest felt, in all churches, for those who are able to *give* good dinners, than for those poor miserable sinners who can scarcely *get* even a bad one.

But besides this, there was another reason for the Rev. Mr. Mulcahy's anxiety to cultivate a friendship with Peter and his wife—which reason consisted in a very laudable determination to bring about a match between his own niece, Miss Granua Mulcahy and Peter's eldest son, Dan. This speculation he had not yet broached to the family, except by broken hints, and jocular allusions to the very flattering proposals that had been made by many substantial young men for Miss Granua.

In the mean time the wealth of the Connells had accumulated to thousands; their business in the linen and woollen drapery line was incredible. There was scarcely a gentleman within many miles of them, who did not find it his interest to give them his custom. In the hardware, flour, and baking concerns, they were equally fortunate. The report of their wealth had gone far and near, exaggerated, however, as everything of the kind is certain to be; but still there were ample grounds for estimating it at a very high amount.

Their stores were large, and well filled with many a valuable bale; their cellars well stocked with every description of spirits; and their shop, though not large in proportion to their transactions, was well filled, neat, and tastefully fitted up. There was no show, however—no empty glare to catch the eye; on the contrary, the whole concern was marked by an air of solid, warm comfort, that was much more indicative of wealth and independence, than tawdry embellishment would have been.

"A vourneen," said Ellish, "the way to deck out your shop is to keep the best of goods. Wanst the people knows that they'll get betther money-worth here than they'll get anywhere else, they'll come here, whether the shop looks well or ill. Not sayin' but every shop ought to be claue an' dacent, for there's rason in all things."

This, indeed, was another secret of their success. Every article in their shop was of the best description, having been selected by Ellish's own eye and hand in the metropolis, or imported directly from the place of its manufacture. Her periodical visits to Dublin gave her great satisfaction; for it appears that those with whom she dealt, having had sufficient discrimination to appreciate her talents and integrity, treated her with marked respect.

Peter's farm-yard bore much greater evidence of his wealth, than did Ellish's shop. It was certainly surprising to reflect, that by the capacity of two illiterate persons, who began the world with nothing, all the best and latest improvements in farming were either adopted or anticipated. The farm-yard was upon a great scale; for Peter cultivated no less than four hundred acres of land—to such lengths had his enterprise carried him. Threshing machines, large barns, corn-kilns, large stacks, extensive stables, and immense cow-houses, together with the incessant din of active employment perpetually going on—all gave a very high opinion of their great prosperity, and certainly reflected honour upon those whose exertions

had created such a scene about them. One would naturally suppose, when the family of the Connells had arrived to such unexpected riches, and found it necessary to conduct a system whose machinery was so complicated and extensive, that Ellish would have fallen back to the simple details of business, from a deficiency of that comprehensive intelligence which is requisite to conduct the higher order of mercantile transactions; especially as her sons were admirably qualified by practice, example, and education, to ease her of a task, which would appear one of too much difficulty for an unlettered farmer's wife. Such a supposition would be injurious to this excellent woman. So far from this being the case, she was still the moving spirit, the chief conductor of the establishment. Whenever any difficulty arose that required an effort of ingenuity and sagacity, she was able in the homeliest words to disentangle it so happily, that those who heard her wondered that it should at all have appeared to them as a difficulty. She was everywhere. In Peter's farm-yard her advice was as excellent and as useful as in her own shop. On his farms she was the better agriculturist, and she frequently set him right in his plans and speculations for the ensuing year.

She herself was not ignorant of her skill. Many a time has she surveyed the scene about her with an eye in which something like conscious pride might be seen to kindle. On those occasions she usually shook her head, and exclaimed, either in soliloquy, or by way of dialogue, to some person near her:—

"Well, avourneen, all's very right, an' goin' an' bravely; but I only hope that when *I'm gone* I won't be missed!"

"Missed," Peter would reply, if he happened to hear her; "oh, upon my credit"—he was a man of too much consequence to swear "by this an' by that" now—"upon my credit, Ellish, if you die soon, you'll see the ginteel wife I'll have in your place."

"Whisht, avourneen! Although you're but jokin', I don't like to hear it, a villish! No, indeed; we wor too long together, Pether, and lived too happily wid one another, for you to have the heart to think of sich a thing!"

"No, in troth, Ellish, I would be long sarry to do it. It's displasin' to you, achree, an' I won't say it. God spare you to us! It was you put the bone in us, an' that's what all the country says, big an' little, young an' ould; an' God he knows it's truth, and nothin' else."

"Indeed, no, thin, Pether, it's not altogether thruth, you deserve your full share of it. You backed me well, acushla, in everything, an' if you had been a dhrinkin, idle, rollikin' vagabone, what 'ud signify all, that me or the likes o' me could do."

"Faith, an' it was you made me what I am, Ellish; you tuck the soft side o' me, you beauty; an' it's well you did, for by this—hem, upon my reputation, if you had gone to cross purposes wid me, you'd find yourself in the wrong box. An', you phanix o' beauty, you managed the childhre, the crathurs, the same way—an' a good way it is, in throth."

"Pether, wor you ever thinkin' o' Father Mulcahy's *sweetness* to us of late?"

"No, thin, the sorra one o' me thought of it. Why, Ellish?"

"Didn't you observe that for the last three or four months he's full of attentions to us? Every Sunday he brings *you* up, an' *me*, if I'd go, to the althar, an' keeps you there by way of showin' you respect. Pether, it's not you, but your money he respects; an' I think there ought to be no respect o' persons in the chapel, any how. You're not a bit nearer God by bein' near the althar; for how do we know but the poorest crathur there is nearer to heaven than we are!"

"Faith, sure enough, Ellish; but what deep skame are you penetratin, now, you desaver?"

"I'd lay my life, you'll have a proposial o' marriage from Father Mulcahy, atween our Dan an' Miss Granua. For many a day he's hintin' to us, from time to time, about the great offers she had; now what's the rason, if *she* had these great offers, that *he* didn't take them?"

"Bedad, Ellish, you're the greatest head-piece in all Europe. Murderer alive, woman, what a fine counsellor you'd make. An' suppose he did offer, Ellish, what 'ud you be sayin' to him?"

"Why, that 'ud depend entirely upon what he's able to give her—they say he has money. It 'ud depend, too, upon whether Dan has any likin' for her or not."

"He's often wid her, I know; an' I needn't tell you, Ellish, that afore we wor spliced together, I was often wid somebody that I won't mention. At all evints, he has made Dan put the big O afore the Connell, so that he has him now full namesake to the Counsellor; an', faith, *that itself 'ud get him a wife.*"

"Well, the best way is to say nothin', an' to hear nothin', till his Reverence spakes out, an' thin we'll see what can be done."

Ellish's sagacity had not misled her. In a few months afterwards Father Mulcahy was asked by young Dan Connell to dine; and as he and honest Ellish were sitting together, in the course of the evening, the priest broached the topic as follows:—

"Mrs. Connell, I think this whiskey is better than my four-year old, that I bought at the auction the other day, although Dan says mine's better. Between ourselves, that Dan is a clever, talented young fellow; and if he happens upon a steady, sensible wife, there is no doubt but he will die a respectable man. But, by the by, Mrs. Connell, you've never tried *my* whiskey; and, upon my credit, you must soon, for I know your opinion would decide the question."

"Is it worth while to decide it, your Reverence? I suppose the thruth is, Sir, that both is good enough for any one; an' I think that's as much as we want."

Thus far she went, but never alluded to Dan, judiciously throwing the onus of introducing *that* subject upon the priest.

"Dan says mine's better," observed Father Mulcahy; "and I would certainly give a great deal for his opinion upon that or any other subject, except theology."

"You ought," replied Ellish, "to be a betther judge of whiskey nor either Dan nor me; an' I'll tell you why—you dhrink it in more places, and can make comparishment one wid another; but Dan an' me is confined mostly to our own, an' of that same we take very little, an' the less the betther for people in business, or indeed for anybody."

"Very true, Mrs. Connell! But for all that, I won't give up Dan's judgment in anything within his own line of business, still excepting theology, for which he hasn't the learning."

"He's a good son, without *tayology*—as good as ever broke the world's bread," said Peter, "glory be to God! Although, for that matter, he ought to be as well acquainted wid *tay-ology* as your Reverence, in regard that he *sells* more of it nor you do."

"A good son, they say, Mrs. Connell, will make a good husband. I wonder you don't think of settlin' him in life. It's full time."

"Father, avourneen, we must lave that wid himself. I needn't be tellin' you, that it 'ud be hard to find a girl able to bring what the girl that 'ud expect Dan *ought* to bring."

This was a staggerer to the priest, who recruited his ingenuity by drinkin' Peter's health, and Ellish's.

"Have you *nobody* in your eye for him, Mrs. Connell?"

"Faith, I'll engage she has," replied Peter, with a ludicrous grin—"I'll venture for to say she has *that*."

"Very right, Mrs. Connell; it's all fair. Might one ask who she is; for, to tell you the truth, Dan is a favourite of mine, and I must make it a point to see him well settled."

"Why, your Reverence," replied Peter again, "jist the one you mitioned."

"Who? I? Why I mentioned *nobody*."

"An' *that's* the very one she has in her eye for him, plase your Reverence—ha, ha, ha! What's the world widout a joke, Docthor? beggin' your pardon for makin' so free wid you."

"Peter, you're still a wag," replied the priest; "but, seriously, Mrs. Connell, have you selected any female of *respectable connexions*, as a likely person to be a wife for Dan?"

"Indeed no, your Reverence; I have not. Where could I pitch upon a girl—barrin' a Protestant, an' that 'ud never do—who has a fortune to meet what Dan's to get?"

The priest moved his chair a little, and drank their healths a second time.

"But you know, Mrs. Connell, that Dan needn't care so much about fortune, if he got a girl of *respectable connexions*. He has an independence himself."

"Thru for you, father; but what right would any girl have to expect to be supported by the hard arnin' of me an' my husband, widout bringin' somethin' forrid herself? You know, Sir, that the fortune always goes wid the wife; but am I to fortune off my son to a girl that has nothin'? If my son, plase your Reverence, hadn't a coat to his back, or a guinea in his pocket—as, God be praised, he has both—but, supposin' he hadn't, what right would he have to expect a girl wid a handsom fortune to marry him? There's Paddy Neill, your sarvant boy; now, if Paddy, who's an honest man's son, axed your niece, wouldn't you be apt to lose your timper?"

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Connell, I think your fire's rather hot—allow me to draw back a little. Mrs. Connell, your health again!—Mr. Connell, your fire-side!"

"Thank you, Docthor; but faith I think you ought hardly to dhrink the same fire-side, because it appears to be rather *hot* for your Reverence, at the present time—ha, ha, ha! Jokin' still, Docthor, we must be. Well, what harm! I wish we may never do worse!"

"And what fortune would you expect with a girl of *genteel connexions*—a girl that's accomplished, we'll say in music, plain work, and Irish, vernacularly?—hem! What fortune would you be expecting with such a girl?"

"Why, Docthor, ahagur, the only music I'd wish for my son's wife is a good timper; an' that's what their music-masters can't tache thim. The plain work, although I don't know what you mane by it, sounds well enough; an' as to *Irish, whick-whackularly*, if you mane our own ould tongue, he may get thousands that can spake it *whackinly*, an' nothin' else."

"You're a wealthy woman, certainly, Mrs. Connell, and what's more, I'm not at all surprised at it. Your health, once more, and long life to you! Suppose, however, that Dan got a fitting wife, what would you expect as a proper portion? I have a reason for asking."

"Dan, please your Reverence, will get four thousand to begin the world wid; an', as he's to expect none but a Catholic, I suppose if he gets the fourth part of that, it's as much as he ought to look for."

"A thousand pounds!—hut tut! The woman s beside herself. Why look about you, and try where you can find a Catholic girl with a thousand pounds fortune, except in a gentleman's family, where Dan could never think of going."

"That's thrue, any how, your Reverence," observed Peter.—"A thousand pounds! Ellish! you needn't look for it. Where is it to be had out of a gentleman's family, as his Reverence says thrue enough."

"An' now, Docthor," said Ellish, "what 'ud *you* think a girl ought to bring a young man like Dan, that's to have four thousand pounds?"

"I don't think any Catholic girl of his own rank in the county, could get more than a couple of hundred."

"That's one shillin' to every pound he has," replied Ellish, almost instantaneously. "But, Father, you may as well spake out at wanst," she continued, for she was too quick and direct in all her dealings to be annoyed by circumlocution; "you're desairous of a match between Dan an' Miss Granua?"

"Exactly," said the priest; "and what is more, I believe they are fond of each other. I know Dan is attached to her, for he told me so. But, now that we have mentioned her, I say that there is not a more accomplished girl of her persuasion in the parish we sit in. She can play on the bagpipes better than any other piper in the province, for I taught her myself; and I tell you that in a respectable man's wife a knowledge of music is a desirable thing. It's hard to tell, Mrs. Connell, how they may rise in the world, and get into fashionable company, so that accomplishments, you persave, are good. She can make a shirt and wash it, and she can write Irish. As for dancing, I only wish you'd see her at a hornpipe. All these things put together, along with her genteel connexions, and the prospect of what I may be able to lave her—I say your son may do worse."

"It's not what you'd lave her, sir, but what you'd give her in the first place, that I'd like to hear. Spake up, your Reverence, an' let us know how far you *will* go."

"I'm afeard, Sir," said Peter, "if it goes to a clane bargain atween yez, that Ellish will make you bid up for Dan. Be sharp, Sir, or you'll have no chance; faix, you won't."

"But, Mrs. Connell," replied the priest, "before I spake up, consider her accomplishments. I'll undertake to say, that the best bred girl in Dublin cannot perform music in such style, or on such an instrument as the one she uses. Let us contemplate Dan and her after marriage, in an elegant house, and full business, the dinner over, and they gone up to the drawing-room. Think how agreeable and graceful it would be for Mrs. Daniel O'Connell to repair to the sofa, among a few respectable friends, and, taking up her bag-pipes, set her elbow a-going, until the drone gives two or three broken groans, and the chanter a squeak or two, like a child in the cholic, or a cat that you had trampled on by accident. Then comes the real ould Irish music, that warms the heart. Dan looks upon her graceful position, until the tears of love, taste, and admiration are coming down his cheeks. By and by, the toe of him moves: here another foot is going; and, in no time, there is a hearty dance, with a light heart and a good conscience. You or I perhaps, drop in to see them, and, of course, we partake of the enjoyment."

"Divil a pleasanter," said Peter: "I tell you, I'd like it well; an', for my own part, if the deludher here has no objection, *I'm* not goin' to spoil sport."

Ellish looked hard at the priest; her keen blue eye glittered with a sparkling light, that gave decided proofs of her sagacity being intensely excited.

"All that you've said," she replied, "is very fine; but in regard o' the bag-pipes, an' Miss Granua Mulcahy's squeezin' the music out o' thim—why, if it plased God to bring my son to the staff an' bag—a common beggar—indeed, in that case, Miss Granua's bagpipes might sarve both o' thim, an' help, maybe, to get them a night's lodgin' or so; but until that time comes, if you respect your niece, you'll burn her bagpipes, dhroner, chanther, an' all. If you *are* for a match, which I doubt, spake out, as I said, and say what fortune you'll pay down on the nail wid her, otherwise we're losin' our time, an' that's a loss one can't make up."

The priest, who thought he could have bantered Ellish into an alliance, without pledging himself to pay any specific fortune, found that it was necessary for him to treat the matter seriously, if he expected to succeed. He was certainly anxious for the match; and as he really wished to see his niece—who, in truth, was an excellent girl, and handsome—well settled, he resolved to make a stretch and secure Dan if possible.

"Mrs. Connell," said he, "I will be brief with you. The most I can give her is three hundred pounds, and even that by struggling and borrowing. I will undertake to pay it as you say—on the nail! for I am really anxious that my niece should be connected with so worthy and industrious a family. What do you say?"

"*I'm* willin' enough," replied Peter. "It's not asy to get that wid a Catholic girl."

"There's some thruth in what you say, aroon, sure enough," observed Ellish; "an' if his Reverence puts another hundhre to it, why, in the name of goodness, let them go together. If you don't choose that, Docthor, never breathe the subject to me agin. Dan's not an ould man yit, an' has time enough to get wives in plenty."

"Come," replied the priest, "there's my hand, it's a bargain; although I must say there's no removing you from your point. I *will* give four hundred, hook or crook; but I'll have sad scrambling to get it together. Still I'll make it good."

"Down on the nail?" inquired Ellish.

"Ay! ay! Down on the nail," replied the priest.

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, a bargain be it," said Peter; "but, upon my credit, Ellish, I won't have the bag-pipes burnt, any how. Faith, I must hear an odd tune, now an' thin, when I call to see the childhre."

"Pether, acushla, have sinse. Would you wish to see your daughter-in-law playin' upon the bag-pipes, when she ought to be mindin' her business, or attendin' her childhre? No, your reverence, the pipes must be laid aside. I'll have no piperly connexion for a son of mine."

The priest consented to this, although Peter conceded it with great reluctance. Further preliminaries were agreed upon, and the evening passed pleasantly, until it became necessary for Mr. Mulcahy to bid them good night.

When they were gone, Peter and Ellish talked over the matter between themselves in the following dialogue:

"The fortune's a small one," said Ellish to her husband; "an' I suppose you wondher that I consinted to take so little."

"Sure enough, I wondhered at it," replied Peter: "but, for my own part, I'd give my son to her widout a penny o' fortune, in ordher to be connected wid the priest; an' besides, she's a fine, handsome, good girl—ay, an' his fill of a wife, if she had but the shift to her back."

"Four hundhre wid a priest's niece, Pether, is before double the money wid any other. Don't you know, that when they set up for themselves, he can bring the custom of the whole parish to them? It's unknown the number o' ways he can sarve them in. Sure, at stations an' weddings, wakes, marriages, and funerals, they'll all be proud to let the priest know that they purchased whatever they wanted from his niece an' her husband. Betther!—faix, four hundhre from *him* is worth three times as much from another."

"Glory to you, Ellish!—bright an' cute for ever! Why, I'd back you for a woman that could buy an' sell Europe, aginst the world. Now, isn't it odd that I never think of these long-headed skames?"

"Ay do you, often enough, Pether; but you keep them to yourself, abouchal."

"Faith, I'm close, no doubt of it; an'—but there's no use in sayin' any more about it—you said whatsoever came into my own head consarnin' it. Faith, you did, you phanix."

In a short time the marriage took place. Dan, under the advice of his mother, purchased a piece of ground most advantageously located, as the

site of a mill, whereon an excellent one was built; and as a good mill had been long a desideratum in the country, his success was far beyond his expectations. Every speculation, in fact, which Ellish touched, prospered. Fortune seemed to take delight, either in accomplishing, or anticipating her wishes. At least, such was the general opinion, although nothing could possibly be more erroneous than to attribute her success to mere chance. The secret of all might be ascribed to her good sense, and her exact knowledge of the precise moment when to take the tide of fortune at its flow. Her son, in addition to the mill, opened an extensive mercantile establishment in the next town, where he had ample cause to bless the instructions of his mother, and her foresight in calculating upon the advantage of being married to the priest's niece.

Soon after his marriage, the person who had for many years kept the head inn of the next town died, and the establishment was advertised for sale. Ellish was immediately in action. Here was an opportunity of establishing the second son in a situation which had enabled the late proprietor of it to die nearly the richest man in the parish. A few days, therefore, before that specified for the sale, she took her featherbed car, and had an interview with the executors of the late proprietor. Her character was known, her judgment and integrity duly estimated, and, perhaps, what was the weightiest argument in her favour, her purse was forthcoming to complete the offer she had made. After some private conversation between the executors, her proposal was accepted, and before she returned home, the head inn, together with all its fixtures and furniture, was her property.

The second son, who was called after his father, received the intelligence with delight. One of his sisters was, at his mother's suggestion, appointed to conduct the house-keeping department, and keep the bar, a duty for which she was pretty well qualified by her experience at home.

"I will paint it in great style," said Peter the Younger. "It must be a head Inn no longer; I'll call it a Hotel, for that's the whole fashion."

"It wants little, avourneen," said his mother; "it was well kep: some paintin' an' other improvements it does want, but don't be extravagant. Have it clane an' dacent, but, above all things, comfortable, an' the attendance good. That's what'll carry you an—not a flourish o' paintin' outside, an' dirt, an' confusion, an' bad attendance widin. Considher, Pether darlin', that the man who owned it last, feathered his nest well in it, but never called it a Hotill. Let it appear on the outside jist as your ould customers used to see it; but improve it widin as much as you can, widout bein' lavish an it, or takin' up the place wid nonsense."

"At all evints, I'll have a picture of the Liberator over the door, an' 'O'Connell' written under it. It's both our names, and besides it will be 'killin' two birds with one stone.'"

"No, avourneen. Let me advise you, if you wish to prosper in life, to keep yourself out of party-work. It only stands betune you an' your business; an' it's surely wiser for you to mind your own affairs than the affairs of the nation. There's rason in everything. No man in trade has a right, widout committin' a sin, to neglect his family for politics or parties. There's Jack Cummins that was doin' well in his groceries, till

he began to make speeches, an' get up public meetings, an' write petitions, an' now he has nothin' to trouble him *but* politics, for his business is gone. Every one has liberty to think as they please. We can't expect Protestants to think as we do, nor Protestants can't suppose that we ought to think as they'd wish; an' for that same reason, we should make allowance on both sides, an' not be like many we know, that have their minds up, expectin' they don't know what, instead of workin' for themselves and their families as they ought to do. Pether, won't you give that up, a villish?"

"I believe you're right, mother. I didn't see it before in the light you've placed it in."

"Then, Pether, darlin', lose no time in gettin' into your place—you an' Alley; an' faix, if you don't both manage it cleverly, I'll never spake to yez."

Here was a second son settled, and nothing remained but to dispose of their two daughters in marriage to the best and most advantageous offers. This, in consequence of their large fortunes, was not a matter of much difficulty. The eldest, Alley, who assisted her brother to conduct the Inn, became the wife of an extensive grazier, who lived in an adjoining county. The younger, Mary, was joined to Father Mulcahy's nephew, not altogether to the satisfaction of the mother, who feared that two establishments of the same kind, in the same parish, supported by the same patronage, must thrive at the expense of each other. As it was something of a love-match, however, she ultimately consented.

"Avourneen," said she, "the parish is big enough, an' has customers enough to support two o' them; an' I'll engage his Reverence will do what he can for them both."

In the mean time, neither she nor her husband was dependent upon their children. Peter still kept the agricultural department in operation; and although the shop and warehouse were transferred to Mr. Mulcahy, in right of his wife, yet it was under the condition of paying a yearly sum to Mrs. Connell and her husband, ostensibly as a provision, but really as a spur to their exertions. A provision they could not want, for their wealth still amounted to thousands, independently of the large annual profits arising out of their farms.

For some time after the marriage of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Connell took a very active part in her son-in-law's affairs. He possessed neither experience, nor any knowledge of business whatsoever, though he was not deficient in education, nor in capacity to acquire both. This pleased Mrs. Connell very much, who set herself to the task of instructing him in the principles of commercial life, and in the best methods of transacting business.

"The first rules," said she to him, "for you to observe is these: tell truth: be sober; be punctual; rise early, persevere; avoid extravagance; keep your word; an' watch your health. Next: don't be proud; give no offence; talk sweetly; be ready to oblige, when you can do it without inconvenience, but don't put yourself or your business out o' your ways to serve any body.

"Thirdly: keep an appearance of substance an' comfort about your

place, but don't go beyant your manes in doin' it; when you make a bargain, think what a correcter them you dale wid bears, an' whether or not you found them honest before, if you ever had business wid them.

"When you buy a thing, appear to know your own mind, an' don't be hummin' an' hawin', an' higglin', an' longin' as if your teeth wor watherin' afther it; but be manly, downright, an' quick; they'll then see that you know your business, an' they won't be keepin' off an' an, but will close wid you at wanst.

"Never drink at bargain makin'; an' never pay money in a public-house if you can help it; if you must do it, go into an inn, or a house that you know to be dacent.

"Never stay out late in a fair or market; don't make a poor mouth; on the other hand, don't boast of your wealth; keep no low company; don't be rubbin' yourself aginst your betthers, but keep wid your aquils. File your loose papers an' accounts; an' keep your books up to the day. Never put off any thing that can be done, when it ought to be done. Go early to bed; but be the last up at night, and the first in the mornin', an' there's no fear o' you."

Having now settled all her children in comfort and independence, with each a prospect of rising still higher in the world, Mrs. Connell felt that the principal duties devolving upon her had been discharged. It was but reasonable, she thought, that, after the toil of a busy life, her husband and herself should relax a little, and enjoy with lighter minds the ease for which they had laboured so long and unremittingly.

"Do you know what I'm thinkin' of, Pether?" said she, one summer evening in their farm-yard.

"Know, is it?" replied Peter—"some long-headed plan that none of us 'ud ever think of, but that will stare us in the face the moment you mintion it. What is it, you ould sprig o' beauty?"

"Why, to get a snug jauntin'-car for you an' me. I'd like to see you comfortable in your old days, Pether. You're gettin' stiff, a hatur, an' will be good for nothin', by an' by."

"Stiff! Arrah, by this an' by—my reputation, I'm younger nor e'er a one o' my sons yet, you——eh?" said Peter, pausing—"Faith then I dunna that. Upon my credit, I think, on second thoughts, that a car 'ud be a mighty comfortable thing for me. Faith I do, an' for you, too, Ellish."

"The common car," she continued, "is slow an' throublesome, an' joults the life out o' me."

"By my reputation, you're not the same woman since you began to use it, that you wor before at all. Why, it'll shorten your life. The pillion's dacent enough; but the jauntin'-car!—faix, it's what 'ud make a fresh woman o' you—divil a lie in it."

"You're not puttin' in a word for *yourself* now Pether?"

"To be sure I am, an' for both of us. I'd surely be proud to see yourself an' myself sittin' in our glory upon our own jauntin'-car. Sure we can afford it, an' ought to have it too. Bud-an-ager! what's the rason I didn't think of it long ago?"

"Maybe you did, acushla; but you forgot it. Wasn't that the way wid you, Pether? Tell the thruth."

"Why, thin, bad luck to the lie in it, since you must know. About this time twelve months—no, faix, I'm wrong, it was afore Dan's marriage—I had thoughts o' spakin' to you about it, but somehow it left my head. Upon my word, I'm in airnest, Ellish."

"Well, avick, make your mind asy; I'll have one from Dublin in less nor a fortnight. I can thin go about of an odd time, an' see how Dan an' Pether's comin' an. It'll be a pleasure to me to advise an' direct thim, sure, as far an' as well as I can. I only hope God will enable thim to do as much for their childher, as he enabled us to do for them, glory be to his name!"

Peter's eye rested upon her as she spoke: a slight shade passed over his face, but it was the symptom of deep feeling and affection, whose current had run smooth and unbroken during the whole life they had spent together.

"Ellish," said he, in a tone of voice that strongly expressed what he felt, "you wor one o' the best wives that ever the Almighty gev to mortal man. You wor, avourneen—you wor, you wor!"

"I intind, too, to begin an' make my sowl a little," she continued; "we had so much to do, Pether, aroon, that, indeed, we hadn't time to think of it all along; but now, that everything *else* is settled, we ought to think about *that*, an' make the most of our time while we can."

"Upon my conscience, I've strong notions myself o' the same thing," replied Peter: "An' I'll back you in that, as well as in everything else. Never fear, if we pull together, but we'll bring up the lost time. Faith, we will! Sowl, if *you* set about it, let me see them that 'ud prevint your goin' to heaven!"

"Did Paddy Donovan get the bay filly's foot aised, Pether?"

"He's gone down wid her to the forge: the poor crathur was very lame to-day."

"That's right; an' let Andy Murtagh bring down the sacks from Drumdough early to-morrow. That whate ought to go to the market on Thursday, an' the other stacks ought to be thrashed out off hand."

"Well, well; so it will be all done. Tare alive! if myself knows how you're able to keep an eye on everything. Come in, an' let us have our *tay*."

For a few months after this, Ellish was perfectly in her element. The jaunting-car was procured; and her spirits seemed to be quite elevated. She paid regular visits to both her sons, looked closely into their manner of conducting business, examined their premises, and subjected every fixture and improvement made or introduced without her sanction, to the most rigorous scrutiny. In fact, what, between Peter's farm, her daughter's shop, and the establishments of her sons, she never found herself more completely encumbered with business. She had intended "to make her soul," but her time was so fully absorbed by the affairs of those in whom she felt so strong an interest, that she really forgot the spiritual resolution in the warmth of her secular pursuits.

(One evening, about this time, a horse belonging to Peter happened to

fall into a ditch, from which he was extricated with much difficulty by the labourers. Ellish, who thought it necessary to attend, had been standing for some time directing them how to proceed; her dress was rather thin, and the hour, which was about twilight, chilly, for it was the middle of autumn. Upon returning home she found herself cold, and inclined to shiver. At first she thought but little of these symptoms; for having never had a single day's sickness, she was scarcely competent to know that they were frequently the forerunners of very dangerous and fatal maladies. She complained, however, of slight illness, and went to bed without taking anything calculated to check what she felt. Her sufferings during the night were dreadful: high fever had set in with a fury that threatened to sweep the powers of life like a wreck before it. The next morning the family, on looking into her state more closely, found it necessary to send instantly for a physician.

On arriving, he pronounced her to be in a dangerous pleurisy, from which, in consequence of her plethoric habit, he expressed but faint hopes of her recovery. This was melancholy intelligence to her sons and daughters; but to Peter, whose faithful wife she had been for thirty years, it was a dreadful communication indeed.

"No hopes, Docthor!" he exclaimed, with a bewildered air: "did you say no hopes, Sir?—Oh! no, you didn't—you couldn't say that there's no hopes!"

"The hopes of her recovery, Mr. Connell, are but slender,—if any."

"Docthor, I'm a rich man, thanks be to God an' to —" he hesitated, cast back a rapid and troubled look towards the bed whereon she lay, then proceeded—"no matther, I'm a rich man: but if you can spare her to me, I'll divide what I'm worth in this world wid you: I will, Sir; an' if that won't do, I'll give up my last shillin' to save her, an' thin I'd beg my bit an' sup through the counthry, only let me have *her* wid me."

"As far as my skill goes," said the doctor, "I shall, of course, exert it to save her; but there are some diseases which we are almost always able to pronounce fatal at first sight. This, I fear, is one of them. Still I do not bid you despair—there is, I trust, a shadow of hope."

"The blessin' o' the Almighty be upon you, Sir, for that word! The best blessing of the heavenly Father rest upon you an' yours for it!"

"I shall return in the course of the day," continued the physician; "and as you feel the dread of her loss so powerfully, I will bring two other medical gentlemen of skill with me."

"Heavens reward you for that, Sir! The heavens above reward you an' them for it! Payment!—och, that signifies but little; but you an' thim 'll be well paid. Oh, Docthor, achora, thry an' save her!—Och, thry an' save her!"

"Keep her easy," replied the doctor, "and let my directions be faithfully followed. In the mean time, Mr. Connell, be a man, and display proper fortitude under a dispensation which is common to all men in your state."

To talk of resignation to Peter was an abuse of words. The poor man had no more perception of the consolations arising from a knowledge of religion than a child. His heart sank within him, for the prop

on which his affections had rested was suddenly struck down from under them.

Poor Ellish was in a dreadful state. Her malady seized her in the very midst of her worldly-mindedness; and the current of her usual thoughts, when stopped by the aberrations of intellect peculiar to her illness, bubbled up, during the temporary returns of reason, with a stronger relish of the world. It was utterly impossible for a woman like her, whose habits of thought, and the tendency of whose affections, had been all directed towards the acquisition of wealth, to wrench them for ever and at once from the objects on which they were fixed. This, at any time, would have been to her a difficult victory to achieve; but now, when stunned by the stroke of disease, and confused by the pangs of severe suffering, tortured by a feverish pulse and a burning brain, to expect that she could experience the calm hopes of religion, or feel the soothing power of Christian sorrow, was utter folly. 'Tis true, her life had been a harmless one: her example, as an industrious and enterprising member of society, was worthy of imitation. She was an excellent mother, a good neighbour, and an admirable wife; but the duties arising out of these different relations of life, were all made subservient to, and mixed up with, her great principle of advancing herself in the world, whilst that which is to come never engaged one moment's serious consideration.

When Father Mulcahy came to administer the rites of the church to Ellish, he found her in a state of incoherency. Occasional gleams of reason broke out through the cloud that obscured her intellect, but they carried with them the marks of a mind knit indissolubly to wealth and aggrandisement. The same tenor of thought, and the same broken fragments of ambitious speculation, floated in rapid confusion through the tempests of delirium which swept with awful darkness over her spirit.

"Mrs. Connell," said he, "can you collect yourself? Strive to compose your mind, so far as to be able to receive the aids of religion."

"Oh, oh!—my blood's boilin'! Is that—is that Father Mulcahy?"

"It is, dear: strive now to keep your mind calm, till you prepare yourself for judgment."

"Keep up his head, Paddy—keep up his head, or he'll be smothered under the wather an' the sludge. Here, Mike, take this rope: pull, man,—pull, or the horse will be lost! Oh, my head!—I'm boilin'—I'm burnin'!"

"Mrs. Connell, let me entreat you to remember that you are on the point of death, and should raise your heart to God, for the pardon and remission of your sins."

"Oh! Father dear, I neglected that, but I intinded—I intinded—Where's Pether?—bring, bring—Pether to me!"

"Turn your thoughts to God now, my dear. Are you clear enough in your mind for confession?"

"I am, Father; I am avourneen. Come, come here, Pether! Pether, I'm goin' to lave you, ashore machree! I could part wid them all but—but *you*."

"Mrs. Connell, for Heaven's sake"—

"Is this—is this—Father Mulcahy? Oh! I'm ill—ill!"—

"It is, dear; it is. Compose yourself and confess your sins."

"Where's Mary? She'll neglect—neglect to lay in a stock o' linen, although I—I—Oh, Father, avourneen! won't you pity me? I'm sick—oh, I'm very sick!"

"You are, dear—you are, God help you, very sick, but you'll be better soon. Could you confess, dear?—do you think you could?"

"Oh, this pain—this pain!—it's killin' me!—Pether—Pether, a *suillish machree**, have you des—have you desarted me?"

The priest, conjecturing that if Peter made his appearance she might feel soothed, and perhaps sufficiently composed to confess, called him in from the next room.

"Here's Peter," said the priest, presenting him to her view—"Here's Peter, dear."

"Oh! what a load is on me!—this pain—this pain—is killin' me—won't you bring me Pether? Oh, what will I do? Who's there?"

The mental pangs of poor Peter were, perhaps, equal in intensity to those which she suffered physically.

"Ellish," said he, in smothered sobs—"Ellish, acushla machree, sure I'm wid you here; here I'm sittin' on the bed wid you, achora machree."

"Catch my hand, thin. Ah, Pether! won't you pity your Ellish?—Won't you pity me—won't you pity me? Oh! this pain—this pain—is killin' me!"

"It is, it is, my heart's delight—it's killin' us both. Oh, Ellish, Ellish! I wish I was dead sooner nor see you in this agony. I ever loved you!—I ever an' always loved you, avourneen dheelish;—but now I would give my heart's best blood, if it 'ud save you. Here's Father Mulcahy come."

"About the mon—about the money—Pether—what do you intind—Oh! my blood—my blood's a-fire!—Mother o' Heaven!—Oh! this pain is—is takin' me from all—ALL!—Rise me up!"

"Here, my darlin'—treasure o' my heart—here—I'm puttin' your head upon my breast—upon *my* breast, Ellish, ahagur. Marciful Virgin—Father dear," said Peter, bursting into bitter tears—"her head's like fire! Oh! Ellish, Ellish, Ellish!—but my heart's brakin' to feel this! Have marcy on her, sweet God—have marcy on her! Bear witness, Father of heaven—bear witness, an' hear the vow of a brakin' heart. I here solemnly promise, before God, to make, if I'm spared life an' health to do it, a Station on my bare feet to Lough Derg, if it plases you, sweet Father o' pity, to spare her to me this day! Oh! but the hand o' God, Father dear, is terrible!—feel her brow!—Oh! but it's terrible!"

"It is terrible," said the priest; "and terribly is it laid upon her, poor woman! Peter, do not let this scene be lost. Remember it."

"Oh, Father dear, can I ever forget it?—can I ever forget seein' my darlin' in sich agony?"

"Pether," said the sick woman, "will you get the car ready for to-mor—to-morrow—till I look at that piece o' land that Dan bought, before he—he closes the bargain?"

* The light of my heart.



Death of Ellish.

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"Father, jewel!" said Peter, "can't you get the world banished out of her heart? Oh, I'd give all I'm worth to see that heart fixed upon God! I could bear to part wid her, for she must die some time; but to go wid this world's thoughts an' temptations ragin' strong in her heart—mockin' God, an' hope, an' religion, an' everything:—oh! that I can't bear! Sweet Jasus, change her heart!—Queen o' Heaven, have pity on her, an' save her!"

The husband wept with great sorrow as he uttered these words.

"Neither reasoning nor admonition can avail her," replied the priest; "she is so incoherent that no train of thought is continued for a single minute in her mind. I will, however, address her again. Mrs. Connell, will you make a struggle to pay attention to me for a few minutes? Are you not afraid to meet God? You are about to die!—prepare yourself for judgment."

"Oh, Father dear! I can't—I can't—I *am* af—afraid—Hooh!—hooh!—*God!* You *must* do somethin' for—for me! I ne-ver done anything for myself."

"Glory be to God! that she has that much sinse, any way," exclaimed the husband. "Father, ahagur, I trust my vow was heard."

"Well, my dear—listen to me," continued the priest—"can you not make the best confession possible? Could you calm yourself for it?"

"Pether, avick machree—Pether,"—

"Ellish, avourneen, I'm here!—my darlin', I *am* your vick machree, an' ever was. Oh, Father! my heart's brakin'! I can't bear to part wid her. Father of heaven, pity us this day of throuble!"

"Be near me, Pether; stay wid me—I'm very lonely. Is this you keepin' my head up?"

"It is, it is! I'll never lave you till—till!"—

"Is the carman come from Dublin wid—the broad-cloth?"

"Father of heaven! she's gone back again!" exclaimed the husband. "Father, jewel! have you no prayers that you'd read for her? You wor ordained for these things, an' comin' from *you*, they'll have more strength. Can you do nothin' to save my darlin'?"

"My prayers will not be wanting," said the priest: "but I am watching for an interval of sufficient calmness to hear her confession; and I very much fear that she will pass in darkness. At all events, I will anoint her by and by. In the mean time, we must persevere a little longer; she may become easier, for it often happens that reason gets clear immediately before death."

Peter sobbed aloud, and wiped away the tears that streamed from his cheeks. At this moment her daughter and son-in-law stole in, to ascertain how she was, and whether the rites of the church had in any degree soothed or composed her.

"Come in, Denis," said the priest to his nephew, "you may both come in. Mrs. Mulcahy, speak to your mother: let us try every remedy that might possibly bring her to a sense of her awful state."

"Is she raving still?" inquired the daughter, whose eyes were red with weeping.

The priest shook his head;—"Ah, she is—she is! and I fear she will

scarcely recover her reason before the judgment of heaven opens upon her!"

"Oh thin may the Mother of Glory forbid that!" exclaimed her daughter—"anything at all but that! Can you do nothin' for her, uncle?"

"I'm doing all I can for her, Mary," replied the priest; "I'm watching a calm moment to get her confession, if possible."

The sick woman had fallen into a momentary silence, during which she caught the bed-clothes like a child, and felt them, and seemed to handle their texture, but with such an air of vacancy as clearly manifested that no co-responding association existed in her mind.

The action was immediately understood by all present. Her daughter again burst into tears; and Peter, now almost choked with grief, pressing the sick woman to his heart, kissed her burning lips.

"Father, jewel," said the daughter, "there it is, and I feared it—the sign, uncle—the sign!—don't you see her gropin' the clothes? Oh, mother, darlin', darlin'!—are we going to lose you for ever?"

"Oh! Ellish, Ellish—won't you spake one word to me afore you go? Won't you take one farewell of me—of ME, aroon ashore, before you depart from us for ever!" exclaimed her husband.

"Feeling the bed-clothes," said the priest, "is not *always* a sign of death; I have known many to recover after it."

"Husht," said Peter—"husht!—Mary—Mary! Come here—hould your tongues! Oh, *it's past*—it's past!—it's all past, an' gone—all hope's over! Heavenly father!"

The daughter after listening for a moment, in a paroxysm of wild grief, clasped her mother's recumbent body in her arms, and kissed her lips with a vehemence almost frantic. "You won't go, my darlin'—is it from your own Mary that you'd go? Mary, that you loved best of all your childhre!—Mary, that you always said, an' every body said, was your own image! Oh, you won't go without one word, to say you know her!"

"For Heaven's sake," said Father Mulcahy, "what do you mean?—are you mad?"

"Oh! uncle dear! don't you hear?—don't you hear?—listen, an' sure you will—all hope's *gone* now—gone—gone! *The dead rattle!*—listen!—the dead rattle's in her throat!"—

The priest bent his ear a moment, and distinctly heard the gurgling noise produced by the phlegm, which is termed with wild poetical accuracy, by the peasantry—the "dead rattle," or "death rattle," because it is the immediate and certain forerunner of death.

"True," said the priest—"too true; the last shadow of hope is gone. We must now make as much of the time as possible. Leave the room for a few minutes, till I anoint her. I will then call you in."

They accordingly withdrew, but in about fifteen or twenty minutes he once more summoned them to the bed of the dying woman.

"Come in," said he, "I have anointed her—come in, and kneel down till we offer up a Rosary to the Blessed Virgin, under the hope that she may intercede with God for her, and cause her to pass out of life happily. She was calling for you, Peter, in your absence; you had better stay with her."

"I will," said Peter, in a broken voice, "I'll stay nowhere else."

"An' I'll kneel at the bed-side," said the daughter. "She was the kind mother to me, and to us all; but to me in particular. 'Twas with me she took her choice to live, when they war all striving for her. Oh," said she, taking her mother's hand between hers, and kneeling down to kiss it, "a Vahr dheelish! * did we ever think to see you departing from us this way! snapped away without a minute's warning! If it was a long sickness, that you'd be calm and sinsible in; but to be hurried away into eternity, and your mind dark! Oh, Vahr dheelish, my heart is broke to see you this way!"

"Be calm," said the priest; "be quiet till I open the Rosary."

He then offered up the usual prayers which precede its repetition, and after having concluded them, commenced what is properly called the Rosary itself, which consists of fifteen Decades, each Decade containing the Hail Mary repeated ten times, and the Lord's Prayer once. In this manner the Decade goes round from one to another, until, as we have said above, it is repeated fifteen times; or, in all the *Ave Maria's* one hundred and sixty-five times, without variation. From the indistinct utterance, elevated voice, and rapid manner in which it is pronounced, it certainly has a wild, and is more strongly impressed with the character of a mystic rite, or incantation, than with any other religious ceremony with which we could compare it.

When the priest had repeated the first part, he paused for the response; neither the husband nor daughter, however, could find utterance.

"Denis," said he, to his nephew, "do you take up the next."

His nephew complied; and with much difficulty Peter and his daughter were able to join in it, repeating here and there a word or two, as well as their grief and sobbings would permit them.

The heart must indeed have been an unfeeling one, to which a scene like this would not have been deeply touching and impressive. The poor dying woman reclined with her head upon her husband's bosom; the daughter knelt at the bed-side, with her mother's hand pressed against her lips, she herself convulsed with sorrow—the priest was in the attitude of earnest supplication, having the stole about his neck, his face and arms raised towards heaven—the son-in-law was bent over a chair, with his face buried in his hands. Nothing could exceed the deep, the powerful expression of entreaty, which marked every tone and motion of the parties, especially those of the husband and daughter. They poured an energy into the few words which they found voice to utter, and displayed such a concentration of the faculties of the soul in their wild unregulated attitudes, and streaming upturned eyes, as would seem to imply that their own salvation depended upon that of the beloved object before them. Their words, too, were accompanied by such expressive tokens of their attachment to her, that the character of prayer was heightened by the force of the affection which they bore her. When Peter, for instance, could command himself to utter a word, he pressed his dying wife to his bosom, and raised his eyes to heaven in a manner that would have melted

* Sweet mother!

any human heart; and the daughter, on joining occasionally in the response, pressed her mother's hand to her heart, and kissed it with her lips, conscious that the awful state of her parent had rendered more necessary the performance of the two tenderest duties connected with a child's obedience—prayer and affection.

When the son-in-law had finished his Decade, a pause followed, for there was none now to proceed but her husband or her daughter.

"Mary, dear," said the priest, "be a woman; don't let your love for your mother prevent you from performing a higher duty. Go on with the prayer—you see she is passing fast."

"I'll try, uncle," she replied—"I'll try; but—but—it's hard, hard, upon me."

She commenced, and by an uncommon effort so far subdued her grief, as to render her words intelligible. Her eyes, streaming with tears, were fixed with a mixture of wildness, sorrow, and devotedness, upon the countenance of her mother, until she had completed her Decade.

Another pause ensued. It was now necessary, according to the order and form of the Prayer, that Peter should commence, and offer up his supplications for the happy passage from life to eternity of her who had been his inward idol during a long period. Peter knew nothing about sentiment, or the philosophy of sorrow; but he loved his wife with the undivided power of a heart in which nature had implanted her strongest affections. He knew, too, that his wife had loved him with a strength of heart equal to his own. He loved her, and she deserved his love.

The pause, when the prayer had gone round to him, was long; those who were present at length turned their eyes towards him, and the priest, now deeply affected, cleared his voice, and simply said, "Peter," to remind him that it was his duty to proceed with the Rosary.

Peter, however, instead of uttering the prayer, burst out into a tide of irrepressible sorrow.—"Oh!" said he, enfolding her in his arms, and pressing his lips to hers: "Ellish, ahagur machree! sure when I think of all the goodness, an' kindness, an' tenderness that you showed me—whin I think of your smiles upon me, whin you wanted me to do the right, an' the innocent plans you made out, to benefit me an' mine!—Oh! where was your harsh word, a villish?—where was your could brow, or your bad tongue? Nothin' but goodness—nothin' but kindness, an' love, an' wisdom, ever flowed from these lips! An' now, darlin', pulse-o' my broken heart! these same lips can't spake to me—these eyes don't know me—these hands don't feel me—nor your ears doesn't hear me!"

"Is—is—it *you*?" replied his wife, feebly—"is it—you?—come—come near me—my heart—my heart says it misses *you*—come near me!"

Peter again pressed her in an embrace, and in doing so, unconsciously received the parting breath of a wife whose prudence and affection had saved him from poverty, and, probably, from folly or crime.

The priest, on turning round to rebuke Peter for not proceeding with the prayer, was the first who discovered that she had died; for the grief of her husband was too violent to permit him to notice anything with much accuracy.

"Peter," said he, "I beg your pardon; let me take the trouble of supporting her for a few minutes, after which I must talk to you seriously—very seriously."

The firm, authoritative tone in which the priest spoke, together with Peter's consciousness that he had acted wrongly by neglecting to join in the rosary, induced him to retire from the bed with a rebuked air. The priest immediately laid back the head of Mrs. Connell on the pillow, and composed the features of her lifeless face with his own hands. Until this moment none of them, except himself, knew that she was dead.

"Now," continued he, "all her cares, and hopes, and speculations, touching this world are over—so is her pain; her blood will soon be cold enough, and her head will ache no more. She is dead. Grief is therefore natural; but let it be the grief of a man, Peter. Indeed, it is less painful to look upon her now, than when she suffered such excessive agony. Mrs. Mulcahy, hear me! Oh, it's in vain! Well, well, it is but natural; for it was an unexpected and a painful death!"

The cries of her husband and daughter soon gave intimation to her servants that her pangs were over. From the servants it immediately went to the neighbours, and thus did the circle widen until it reached the furthest ends of the parish. In a short time, also, the mournful sounds of the church-bell, in slow and measured strokes, gave additional notice that a Christian soul had passed into eternity.

It is in such scenes as these that the Roman Catholic clergy knit themselves so strongly into the affections of the people. All men are naturally disposed to feel the offices of kindness and friendship more deeply, when tendered at the bed of death or of sickness, than under any other circumstances. Both the sick-bed and the house of death are necessarily the sphere of a priest's duty, and to render them that justice which we will ever render, when and wheresoever it may be due, we freely grant that many shining, nay, noble instances of Christian virtue are displayed by them on such occasions.

When the violence of grief produced by Ellish's death had subsided, the priest, after giving them suitable exhortations to bear the affliction which had just befallen them with patience, told Peter, that as God, through the great industry and persevering exertions of her who had then departed to another world, had blessed him abundantly with wealth and substance, it was, considering the little time which had been allowed her to repent in a satisfactory manner for her transgressions, his bounden and solemn duty to set aside a suitable portion of that wealth for the delivery of her soul from purgatory, where, he trusted, in the mercy of God, it was permitted to remain.

"Indeed, your Reverence," replied Peter, "it wasn't necessary to mention it, considherin' the way she was cut off from among us, widout even time to confess."

"But blessed be God," said the daughter, "she received the ointment at any raté, and that of itself would get her to purgatory."

"And I can answer for her," said Peter, "that she *intended*, as soon as she'd get everything properly settled for the childhre, to make her soul."

"Ah! good intentions," said the priest, "wont do. I, however, have forewarned you of your duty, and must now leave the guilt or the merit of relieving her departed spirit, upon you and the other members of her family, who are all bound to leave nothing undone that may bring her from pain and fire, to peace and happiness."

"Och! och! ashore, ashore! you're lyin' there—an', oh, Ellish, avourneen, could you think that I—I—would spare money—trash—to bring you to glory wid the angels o' heaven! No, no, Father dear. It's good, an' kind an' thoughtful of you to put it into my head; but I did n't intind to neglect or forget it. Oh, how will I live wantin' her, Father? When I rise in the mornin', a villish, where 'll be your smile and your voice? We won't hear your step, nor see you as we used to do, movin' pleasantly about the place. No—you're gone, avourneen—gone—an' we'll see you and hear you no more!"

His grief was once more about to burst forth, but the priest led him out of the room, kindly chid him for the weakness of his immoderate sorrow, and after making arrangements about the celebration of mass for the dead, pressed his hand, and bade the family farewell.

The death of Ellish excited considerable surprise, and much conversation in the neighbourhood. Every point of her character was discussed freely, and the comparisons instituted between her and Peter were any thing but flattering to the intellect of her husband.

"An' so Ellish is whipped off, Larry," said a neighbour to one of Peter's labouring men. "Faix, an' the best feather in their wing is gone."

"Ay, sure enough, Risthard, you may say that. It was her cleverness made them what they are. She was the best manager in the three kingdoms."

"Ah, she was the woman could make a bargain. I only hope she hasn't brought the luck o' the family away wid her!"

"Why, man alive, she made the sons and daughters as clever as herself—put them up to everything. Indeed, it's quare to think of how that one woman brought them an, an' ris them to what they are!"

"They shouldn't forget themselves as they're doin', thin; for betune you an' me, they're as proud as Turks, an' God he sees it ill becomes them—sits very badly on them itself, when everybody knows that their father an' mother begun the world wid a bottle of private whiskey an' half a pound of smuggled tobacco."

"Poor Pether will break his heart, any way. Oh, man, but she was the good wife. I'm livin' wid them goin' an seven year, an' never hard a cross word from the one to the other. It's she that had the sweet tongue all out, an' *did* manage him; but, afther all, he was worth the full o' the Royal George of her. Many a time, when some poor craythur 'ud come to ax whiskey on score to *put over** some o' their friends, or for a weddin', or a christenin', maybe, an' when the wife 'ud refuse it, Pether 'ud send what whiskey they wanted afther them, widout lettin' her know anything about it. An', indeed, he never lost anything by that; for if

* To put over—the *corps* of a friend. That is to be drunk at the wake and funeral.

they wor to sell their cow, he should be ped, in regard of the kindly way he gave it to them."

"Well, we'll see how they'll manage now that she's gone; but Pether an' the youngest daughter, Mary, is to be pitied."

"The sarra much; barrin' that they'll miss her at first from about the place. You see she has left them above the world, an' full of it. Wealth and substance enough may they thank her for; and that's very good comfort for sorrow, Risthard."

"Faith, sure enough, Larry. There's no lie in that, any way!"

"Awouh! Lie! I have you about it."

Such was the view which had been taken of their respective characters through life. Yet notwithstanding that the hearts of her acquaintances never warmed to her—to use a significant expression current among the peasantry—as they did to Peter, still she was respected almost involuntarily for the indefatigable perseverance with which she pushed forward her own interests through life. Her funeral was accordingly a large one; and the conversation which took place at it, turning, as it necessarily did, upon her extraordinary talents and industry, was highly to the credit of her memory and virtues. Indeed, the attendance of many respectable persons of all creeds and opinions, gave ample proof that the qualities she possessed had secured for her general respect and admiration.

Poor Peter, who was an object of great compassion, felt himself completely crushed by the death of his faithful partner. The reader knows that he had hitherto been a sober, and, owing to Ellish's prudent control, an industrious man. To thought or reflection he was not, however, accustomed; he had, besides, never received any education; if his morals were correct, it was because a life of active employment had kept him engaged in pursuits which repressed immorality, and separated him from those whose society and influence might have been prejudicial to him. He had scarcely known calamity, and when it occurred he was prepared for it neither by experience, nor a correct view of moral duty. On the morning of his wife's funeral, such was his utter prostration both of mind and body, that even his own sons, in order to resist the singular state of collapse into which he had sunk, urged him to take some spirits. He was completely passive in their hands, and complied. This had the desired effect, and he found himself able to attend the funeral. When the friends of Ellish assembled, after the interment, as is usual, to drink and talk together, Peter, who could scarcely join in the conversation, swallowed glass after glass of punch with great rapidity. In the mean time, the talk became louder and more animated; the punch, of course, began to work, and as they sat long, it was curious to observe the singular blending of mirth and sorrow, singing and weeping, laughter and tears, which characterised this remarkable scene. Peter, after about two hours' hard drinking, was not an exception to the influence of this trait of national manners. His heart having been deeply agitated, was the more easily brought under the effects of contending emotions. He was naturally mirthful, and when intoxication had stimulated the current of his wonted humour, the influence of this and his recent sorrow, produced such an

anomalous commixture of fun and grief as could seldom, out of Ireland, be found checkering the mind of one individual.

It was in the midst of this extraordinary din that his voice was heard commanding silence in its loudest and best-humoured key :

"Hould yer tongues," said he ; "bad win to yees, don't you hear me wantin' to sing ! Whist wid yees. Hem—och—' Rise up'—Why, thin, Phil Callaghan, you might thrate me wid more dacency, if you had gumption in you ; I'm sure no one has a betther right to sing first in this company nor myself ; an' what's more, I *will* sing first. Hould your tongues ! Hem !"

He accordingly commenced a popular song, the air of which, though simple, was touchingly mournful.

"Och, rise up, Willy Reilly, an' come alongst wid me,
I'm goin' for to go wid you, and lave this coun-ter-ee ;
I'm goin' to lave my fater, his castles and free lands—
An' away wint Willy Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn.

"Och, they wint o'er hills an' mountains, and valleys that was fair,
An' fled before her fater, as you may shortly hear ;
Her fater followed afther wid a well-chosen armed band,
Och, an' taken was poor Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn."

The simple pathos of the tune, the affection implied by the words, and probably the misfortune of Willy Reilly, all overcame him. He finished the second verse with difficulty, and on attempting to commence a third he burst into tears.

"Colleen bawn ! (fair, or fair-haired, girl)—Colleen bawn !" he exclaimed ; "she's lyin' low that was *my* colleen bawn ! Oh, will ye hould your tongues, an' let me think of what has happened me ? She's gone : Mary, avourneen, isn't she gone from us ? I'm alone, an' I'll be always lonely. Who have I now to comfort me ? I know I have good childhre, neighbours ; but none o' them, all of them, if they wor ten times as many, is n't aqual to her that's in the grave. Her hands won't be about me—there was tindherness in their very touch. An', of a Sunday mornin', how she'd tie an my handkerchly, for I never could rightly tie it an myself, the knot was ever an' always too many for me ; but, och, och, she'd tie it an so snug an' purty wid her own hands, that I did n't look the same man ! The same song was *her* favourite. Here's your healths ; an' sure it's the first time ever we wor together that she was n't wid us : but now, avillish, you're voice is gone—you're silent an' lonely in the grave ; an' why should n't I be sarry for the wife o' my heart that never angered me ? Why shouldn't I ? Ay, Mary, asthore, machree, good right you have to cry afther her ; she was the kind mother to you ; her heart was fixed in you ; there's her fatures on your face ; her very eyes, an' fair hair, too, an' I'll love you, achora, ten times more nor ever, for her sake. Another favourite song of hers, God rest her, was 'Brian O'Lynn.' Throth an' I'll sing it, so I will, for if she was livin' she'd like it.

'Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk au' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail.'

Och, my head's through other ! The sarra one o' me I bleeve, but's out

o' the words, or, as they say, there's a hole in the ballad. Send round the punch will ye? By the hole o' my coat, Parra Gastha, I'll whale you widin an inch of your life, if you don't dhrink. Send round the punch, Dan; an' give us a song, Parra Gastha. Arrah, Paddy, do you remimber—ha, ha, ha—upon my credit, I'll never forget it, the fun we had catchin' Father Soolaghan's horse, the day he gave his shirt to the sick man in the ditch. The Lord rest his sowl in glory—ha, ha, ha—I'll never forget it. Paddy, the song, you thief?"

"No, but tell them about that, Misther Connell."

"Throth, an' I will; but do n't be *Mistherin* me. Faith, this is the height o' good punch. You see—ha, ha, ha! You see, it was one hard summer afore I was marrid to Ellish—mavourneen, that you wor, ashore! Och, och, are we parted at last? Upon my sowl, my heart's breakin'—breakin', (*weeps*); an' no wondher! But as I was saying—all your healths! faith, it is tip-top punch that—the poor man fell sick of a faver, an' sure enough, when it was known what ailed him, the neighbours built a little shed on the roadside for him, in regard that every one was afraid to let him into their place. Howsomever—ha, ha, ha—Father Soolaghan was one day ridin' past upon his horse, an' seein' the crathur lyin' under the shed, on a wislp o' sthraw, he pulls bridle, an' puts the spake an the poor sthranger. So, begad, it came out, that the neighbours were very kind to him, an' used to hand over whatsomever they thought best for him from the back o' the ditch, as well as they could.

"My poor fellow," said the priest, 'you're badly off for linen.'

"Thrue for you, Sir," said the sick man, 'I never longed for anything so much in my life, as I do for a clane shirt an' a glass o' whiskey.'

"The devil a glass o' whiskey I have about me, but you shall have the clane shirt, you poor compassionate crathur," said the priest, stretchin' his neck up an' down, to make sure there was no one comin' on the road—ha, ha, ha!

"Well an' good—" I have *three* shirts,' says his Reverence, 'but I have only one o' them an me, an' that you shall have.'

"So the priest peels himself on the spot, an' lays his black coat and waistcoat afore him across the saddle, thin takin' off his shirt, he *thrown* it across the ditch to the sick man. Whether it was the white shirt, or the black coat danglin' about the horse's neck, the divil a one o' myself can say, but any way, the baste tuck fright, an' made off wid Father Soolaghan, in the state I'm tellin' yez, upon his back—ha, ha, ha!

"Parra Gastha, here, an' I war goin' up at the time to do a little in the distillin' way for Tom Duggan of Aidinasamlagh, an' seen what was goin' an. So off we set, an' we splittin' our sides laughin'—ha, ha, ha—at the figure the priest cut. However, we could do no good, an' he never could pull up the horse, till he came full flight to his own house, opposite the pound there below, and the whole town in convulsions when they seen him. We *gother* up his clothes, an' brought them home to him, an' a good piece o' fun we had wid him, for he loved the joke as well as any man. Well, he was the good an' charitable man, the same Father Soolaghan; but so simple that he got himself into fifty scrapes, God rest him! Och, och, she's lyin' low that often laughed at that, an' I'm here

—ay, I have no one, no one that 'ud show me sich a warm heart as she would. (*weeps*). However, God's will be done. I'll sing yez a song shd liked :—

'Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail.'

Musha, I'm out agin—ha, ha, ha ! Why, I b'lieve there's pishthrogues an me, or I'd remember it. Bud-an-age, dhrink all of ye. Lie in to the liquor, I say ; don't spare it. Here, Mike, send us up another gallon. Faith, we'll make a night of it.

'Och, three maidens a milkin' did go
An' three maidens a milkin' did go ;
An' the winds they blew high,
An' the winds they blew low,
An' they dashed their milkin' pails to an' fro.'

All your healths, childhre ! Neighbours, all your healths ! do n't spare what's before ye. It's long since I tuck a jorum myself an—come, I say, plase God, we'll often meet this way, so we will. Faith, I'll take a sup from this forrid, wid a blessin'. Dhrink, I say, dhrink !"

By the time he had arrived at this pitch, he was able to engross no great portion either of the conversation or attention. Almost every one present had his songs, his sorrows, his laughter, or his anecdotes, as well as himself. Every voice was loud; and every tongue busy. Intricate and entangled was the talk, which, on the present occasion, presented a union of all the extremes which the lights and shadows of the Irish character alone could exhibit under such a calamity as that which brought the friends of the deceased together.

Peter literally fulfilled his promise of taking a jorum in future. He was now his own master ; and as he felt the loss of his wife deeply, he unhappily had recourse to the bottle, to bury the recollection of a woman, whose death left a chasm in his heart, which he thought nothing but the whiskey could fill up.

His transition from a life of perfect sobriety to one of habitual, nay, of daily intoxication, was immediate. He could not bear to be sober ; and his extraordinary bursts of affliction, even in his cups, were often calculated to draw tears from the eyes of those who witnessed them. He usually went out in the morning with a flask of whiskey in his pocket, and sat down to weep behind a ditch—where, however, after having emptied his flask, he might be heard at a great distance, singing the songs which Ellish in her life-time was accustomed to love. In fact, he was generally pitied ; his simplicity of character, and his benevolence of heart, which was now exercised without fear of responsibility, made him more a favourite than he ever had been. His former habits of industry were thrown aside ; as he said himself, he hadn't heart to work ; his farms were neglected, and but for his son-in-law, would have gone to ruin. Peter himself was sensible of this.

"Take them," said he, "into your own hands, Denis ; for me, I'm not able to do anything more at them ; she that kep me up is gone, an' I'm broken down. Take them—take them into your own hands. Give me my bed, bit, an' sup, an' that's all I want."

Six months produced an incredible change in his appearance. Intemperance, whilst it shattered his strong frame, kept him in frequent exuberance of spirits; but the secret grief preyed on him within. Artificial excitement kills, but it never cures; and Peter, in the midst of his mirth and jollity, was wasting away into a shadow. His children, seeing him go down the hill of life so rapidly, consulted among each other on the best means of winning him back to sobriety. This was a difficult task, for his powers of bearing liquor were prodigious. He has often been known to drink so many as twenty-five, and sometimes thirty tumblers of punch, without being taken off his legs, or rendered incapable of walking about. His friends, on considering who was most likely to recall him to a more becoming life, resolved to apply to his landlord—the gentleman whom we have already introduced to our readers. He entered warmly into their plan, and it was settled, that Peter should be sent for, and induced, if possible, to take an oath against liquor. Early the following day a liveried servant came down to inform him that his master wished to speak with him.

"To be sure," said Peter; "divil resave the man in all Europe I'd do more for than the same gentleman, if it was only on account of the regard he had for her that's gone. Come, I'll go wid you in a minute."

He accordingly returned with the flask in his hand, saying, "I never thravel widout a pocket-pistol, John. The times, you see, is not overly safe, an' the best way is to be prepared!—ha, ha, ha! Och, och! It houlds three half-pints."

"I think," observed the servant, "you had better not taste that till after your return."

"Come away, man," said Peter; "we'll talk upon it as we go along: I couldn't do readily widout it. You hard that I lost Ellish?"

"Yes," replied the servant, "and I was very sorry to hear it."

"Did you attind the berrin?"

"No, but my master did," replied the man; "for, indeed, his respect for your wife was very great, Mr. Connell."

This was before ten o'clock in the forenoon, and about one in the afternoon a stout countryman was seen approaching the gentleman's house, with another man bent round his neck, where he hung precisely as a calf hangs round the shoulders of a butcher, when he is carrying it to his stall.

"Good Heavens!" said the owner of the mansion to his lady, "what has happened to John Smith, my dear? Is he dead?"

"Dead!" said his lady, going in much alarm to the drawing-room window: "I protest I fear so, Frank. He is evidently dead! For God's sake go down and see what has befallen him."

Her husband went hastily to the hall-door, where he met Peter with his burden.

"In the name of Heaven, what has happened, Connell?—what is the matter with John? Is he living or dead?"

"First, plase your honour, as I have him on my shouldhers, will you tell me where his bed is?" replied Peter. "I may as well lave him snug, as my hand's in, poor fellow. The devil's bad head he has, your honour. Faith, it's a burnin' shame, so it is, an' nothin' else—to be able to bear so little!"

The lady, children, and servants, were now all assembled about the dead footman, who hung, in the mean time, very quietly round Peter's neck.

"Gracious Heaven! Connell, is the man dead?" she inquired.

"Faith, thin, he is, Ma'am,—for a while any how; bat, upon my credit, it's a burnin' shame, so it is,"—

"The man is drunk, my dear," said her husband—"he's only drunk."

"—a burnin' shame, so it is—to be able to bear no more nor about six glasses, an' the whiskey good, too. Will you ordher one o' thim to show me his bed, Ma'am, if you place," continued Peter, "while he's an me? It 'll save throuble."

"Connell is right," observed his landlord.—"Gallagher, show him John's bed-room."

Peter accordingly followed another servant, who pointed out his bed, and assisted to place the vanquished footman in a somewhat easier position than that in which Peter had carried him.

"Connell," said his landlord, when he returned, "how did this happen?"

"Faith, thin, it's a burnin' shame," said Connell, "to be able only to bear"—

"But *how* did it happen? for he has been hitherto a perfectly sober man."

"Faix, plase your honour, asy enough," replied Peter; "he begun to lecthur me about dhrinkin', so, says I, 'Come an' sit down behind the hedge here, an' we 'll talk it over between us;' so we went in, the two of us, a-back o' the ditch—an' he began to advise me agin dhrink, an' I began to tell him about her that's gone, Sir. Well, well! och, och! no matther!—So, Sir, one story an' one pull from the bottle, brought on another, for divil a glass we had at all, Sir. Faix, he's a tindher-hearted boy, anyhow; for as myself begun to let the tears down, whin the bottle was near out, divil resave the morsel of him but cried afther poor Ellish, as if she had been his mother. Faix, he did! An' it won't be the last sup we 'll have together, plase goodness! But the best of it was, Sir, that the dhrunker he got, he abused me the more for dhrinkin'. Oh, thin, but he's the pious boy whin he gets a sup in his head! Faix, it's a pity ever he 'd be sober, he talks so much scripthur an' devotion in his liquor!"

"Connell," said the landlord, "I am exceedingly sorry to hear that you have taken so openly and inveterately to drink as you have done, ever since the death of your admirable wife. This, in fact, was what occasioned me to send for you. Come into the parlour. Don't go, my dear; perhaps *your* influence may also be necessary. Gallagher, look to Smith, and see that every attention is paid him, until he recovers the effects of his intoxication."

He then entered the parlour, where the following dialogue took place between him and Peter:—

"Connell, I am really grieved to hear that you have become latterly so incorrigible a drinker; I sent for you to-day, with the hope of being able to induce you to give it up."

"Faix, your honour, it's jist what I'd expect from your father's son—

kindness, an' dacency, an' devotion, wor always among yez. Divil resave the family in all Europe I'd do so much for as the same family."

The gentleman and lady looked at each other, and smiled. They knew that Peter's blarney was no omen of their success in the laudable design they contemplated.

"I thank you, Peter, for your good opinion; but in the meantime allow me to ask, what can you propose to yourself by drinking so incessantly as you do?"

"What do I propose to myself by dhrinkin', is it? Why thin to banish grief, your honour. Surely you'll allow that no man has reason to complain who's able to banish the thief for two shillins a-day. I reckon the whiskey at first cost, so that it doesn't come to more nor that at the very outside."

"That is taking a commercial view of affliction, Connell; but you must promise me to give up drinking."

"Why thin upon my credit, your honour astonishes me. Is it to give up banishin' grief? I have a regard for you, Sir, for many a dalin we had together; but for all that, faix, I'd be miserable for no man, barrin' for her that's gone. If I'd be so to oblage any one, I'd do it for your family; for divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Easy, Connell—I am not to be palmed off in that manner; I really have a respect for the character which you bore, and wish you to recover it once more. Consider that you are disgracing yourself and your children by drinking so excessively from day to day—indeed, I am told, almost from hour to hour."

"Augh! don't believe the half o' what you hear, Sir. Faith, somebody has been ddrawin' your honour out! Why I am never dhrunk, Sir; faith, I'm not."

"You will destroy your health, Connell, as well as your character; besides, you are not to be told that it is a sin, a crime against God, and an evil example to society."

"Show me the man, please your honour, that ever seen me *incapable*. That's the proof o' the thing."

"But why do you drink at all? It is not necessary."

"An' do *you* never taste a dhrop yourself, Sir, please your honour? I'll be bound you do, Sir, raise your little finger of an odd time, as well as another. Eh, Ma'am? That's comin' close to his honour! An' faix, small blame to him, an' a weeshy sup o' the wine to the misthress herself, to correct the tindherness of her dilicate appetite."

"Peter, this bantering must not pass: I think I have a claim upon your respect and deference. I have uniformly been *your* friend, and the friend of your children and family, but more especially of your late excellent, and exemplary wife."

"Before God an' man, I acknowledge that, Sir—I do—I do. But, Sir, to spake sarious—it's thruth, Ma'am, downright—to spake sarious, my heart's broke, an' every day it's brakin' more an' more. She's gone, Sir, that used to manage me; an' now I can't turn myself to anything, barrin' the dhrink—God help me!"

"I honour you, Connell, for the attachment which you bear towards

the memory of your wife, but I utterly condemn the manner in which you display it. To become a drunkard is to disgrace her memory. You know it was a character she detested."

"I know it all, Sir, an' that you have thruth an rason on your side; but, Sir, you never lost a wife that you loved; an' long may you be so, I pray the heavenly Father this day! Maybe if you did, Sir, plase your honour, that, wid your heart sinkin' like a stone widin you, you'd thry whether or not *something* couldn't rise it. Sir, only for the dhrink I'd be dead."

"There I totally differ from you, Connell. The drink only prolongs your grief, by adding to it the depression of spirits which it always produces. Had you not become a drinker, you would long before this have been once more a cheerful, active, and industrious man. Your sorrow would have worn away gradually, and nothing but an agreeable melancholy—an affectionate remembrance of your excellent wife—would have remained. Look at other men."

"But where's the man, Sir, had *sich* a wife to grieve for as she was? Don't be hard on me, Sir. I'm not a dhrunkard. It's thrue I dhrink a great dale; but thin I can bear a great dale, so that I'm never incapable."

"Connell," said the lady, "you will break down your constitution, and bring yourself to an earlier death than you would otherwise meet."

"I care very little, indeed, how soon I was dead, not makin' you, Ma'am, an ill answer."

"Oh fie, Connell, for you, a sensible man and a Christian, to talk in such a manner!"

"Throth, thin, I don't, Ma'am. *She's* gone, an' I'd be glad to folly her as soon as I could. Yes, asthore, you're departed from me! an' now I'm gone asthray—out o' the right, an' out o' the good! Oh, Ma'am," he proceeded, whilst the tears rolled fast down his cheeks, "if you knew her—her last words too—Oh, she was—she was—but where's the use o' sayin' what she was?—I beg your pardon, Ma'am,—your honour, Sir, 'ill forgive my want o' manners, sure I know it's bad breedin', but I can't help it."

"Well, promise," said his landlord, "to give up drink. Indeed, I wish you would take an oath against it: you are a conscientious man, and I know would keep it, otherwise I should not propose it, for I discountenance such oaths generally. Will you promise me this, Connell?"

"I'll promise to think of it, your honour,—against takin' a sartin quantity, at any rate."

"If you refuse it, I'll think you are unmindful of the good feeling which we have ever shown your family."

"What?—do you think, Sir, I'm ungrateful to you? That's a sore cut, Sir, to make a villain o' me. Where's the book?—I'll swear this minute. Have you a Bible, Ma'am?—I'll show you that I'm not mane, any way."

"No, Connell, you shall not do it rashly; you must be cool and composed: but go home, and turn it in your mind," she replied; "and remember, that it is the request of me and my husband, for your own good."

"Neither must you swear before me," said his landlord, "but before Mr. Mulcahy, who, as it is an oath connected with your moral conduct, is the best person to be present. It must be voluntary, however. Now, good bye, Connell, and think of what we said; but take care never to carry home any of my servants in the same plight in which you put John Smith to-day."

"Faix thin, Sir, *he* had no business, wid your honour's livery upon his back, to begin lecthurin' me agin dhrinkin', as he did. We may all do very well, Sir, till the timplation crasses us—but that's what thries us. It thried him, but he didn't *stand* it—faix he didn't!—ha, ha, ha! Good mornin', Sir—God bless you, Ma'am! Divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Good morning, Connell—good morning!—Pray remember what we said."

Peter, however, could not relinquish the whiskey. His sons, daughters, friends, and neighbours, all assailed him, but with no success. He either bantered them in his usual way, or reverted to his loss, and sank into sorrow. This last was the condition in which they found him most intractable; for a man is never considered to be in a state that admits of reasoning or argument, when he is known to be pressed by strong gushes of personal feeling. A plan at length struck Father Mulcahy, which he resolved to put into immediate execution.

"Peter," said he, "if you do not abandon drink, I shall stop the masses which I'm offering up for the repose of your wife's soul, and I will also return you the money I received for saying them."

This was perhaps the only point on which Peter was accessible. He felt staggered at such an unexpected intimation, and was for some time silent.

"You will then feel," added the priest, "that your drunkenness is prolonging the sufferings of your wife, and that *she* is as much concerned in your being sober, as you are yourself."

"I *will* give in," replied Peter; "I didn't see the thing in *that* light. No—I will give it up; but if I swear against it, you must allow me a rasonable share every day, an' I'll not go beyant it, of coorse. The thruth is, I'd die soon if I gev it up altogether."

"We have certainly no objection against that," said the priest, "provided you keep within what would injure your health, or make you tipsy. Your drunkenness is not only sinful but disreputable; besides, you must not throw a slur upon the character of your children, who hold respectable and rising situations in the world."

"No," said Peter, in a kind of soliloquy, "I'd lay down my life, avourneen, sooner nor I'd cause you a minute's sufferin'. Father Mulcahy, go an wid the masses. I'll get an oath drawn up, an' whin it's done, I'll swear to it. I know a man that'll do it for me."

The priest then departed, quite satisfied with having accomplished his object; and Peter, in the course of that evening, directed his steps to the house of the village schoolmaster, for the purpose of getting him to "draw up" the intended oath.

"Misther O'Flaherty," said he, "I'm comin' to ax a requist of you

an' I hope you'll grant it to me. I brought down a sup in this flask, an' while we're takin' it, we can talk over what I want."

"If it be anything widin the circumference of my power, set it down, Misther Connell, as already operated upon. I'd drop a pen to no man at keepin' Books by Double Enthry, which is the Italian method invinted by Pope Gregory the Great. The Three Sets bear a theological ratio to the three states of a thrue Christian. 'The Waste-book,' says Pope Gregory, 'is this world, the Journal is purgatory, an' the Ledger is heaven. Or it may be compared,' he says, in the priface of the work, 'to the three states of the Catholic church—the church Militant, the church Suffering, and the church Triumphant.' The larnin' of that man was beyant the reach of credibility."

"Arra, have you a small glass, Masther? You see, Misther O'Flaherty, it's consarnin' purgatory, this that I want to talk about."

"Nancy, get us a glass—oh, here it is! Thin if it be, it's a wrong enthry in the Journal."

"Here 's your health, Masther!—Not forgettin' you, Mrs. O'Flaherty. No, indeed, thin it's not in the Journal, but an oath I'm goin' to take aginst liquor."

"Nothin' is asier to post than it is. We must enter it undher the head of—let me see!—it must go in the *spirit* account, undher the head of Profit an' Loss. Your good health, Mr. Connell!—Nancy, I dhink to your improvement in imperturbability! Yes, it must be enthered undher the "——"

"Faix, undher *the rose*, I think," observed Peter; "don't you know the smack of it? You see since I tuck to it, I like the smell o' what I used to squeeze out o' the barley myself, long ago. Mr. O'Flaherty, I only want you to dhraw up an oath aginst liquor for me; but it's not for the books, good or bad. I promised to Father Mulcahy, that I'd do it. It's regardin' my poor Ellish's sowl in purgatory."

"Nancy, hand me a slate an' cutter. Faith, the same 's a provident resolution; but how is it an' purgatory concatenated?"

"The priest, you see, won't go an wid the masses for her till I take the oath."

"That 's but wake logic, if you ped him for thim."

"Faix, an' I did—an' well, too;—but about the oath? Have you the pencil?"

"I have; jist lave the thing to me."

"Asy, Masther—you don't undherstand it yit. Put down two tumblers for me at home."

"How is that, Misther Connell?—It 's mysterious, if you 're about to swear *aginst* liquor!"

"I am. Put down, as I said, two tumblers for me at home.—Are they down?"

"They are down; but "——"

"Asy!—very good! Put down two more for me at Dan's. Let me see!—two more behind the garden. Well!—put down one at Father Mulcahy's;—two more at Frank M'Carroll's of Kilclay. How many's that?"

"Nine!!!"

"Very good. Now put down one wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Cargah; an' two over wid honest Roger M'Gaugy, of Nurchasey. How many have you now?"

"Twelve in all!!!! But, Misther Connell, there's a demonstration badly wanted here: I must confiss I was always bright, but at present I'm as dark as Nox. I'd thank you for a taste of explanation."

"Asy, man alive! Is there twelve in all?"

"Twelve in all: I've calculated them."

"Well, we'll hould to that. Och, och!—I'm sure, avourneen, afore I'd let you suffer one minute's pain, I'd not scruple to take an oath aginst liquor, any way. He may go an wid the masses now for you, as soon as he likes! Mr. O'Flaherty, will you put that down on paper, an' I'll swear to it, wid a blessin', to-morrow."

"But what object do you wish to effectuate by this?"

"You see, Masther, I dhrink one day wid another from a score to two dozen tumblers, an' I want to swear to no more nor twelve in the twenty-four hours."

"Why, there's intelligibility in *that*!—Wid great pleasure, Mr. Connell, I'll indite it. Katty, tare me a lafe out o' Brian Murphy's copy there."

"You see, Masther, it's for Ellish's sake I'm doin' this. State that in the oath."

"I know it; an' well she desarved that specimen of abstinence from you, Misther Connell. Thank you!—Your health agin! an' God grant you grace an' fortitude to go through wid the same oath!—An' so he will, or I'm grievously mistaken in you."

"OATH AGAINST LIQUOR,

made by me, Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath, on behalf of Misther Peter Connell, of the Cross-roads, Merchant, on one part—and of the soul of Mrs. Ellish Connell, now in purgatory, Merchantess, on the other.

"I solemnly, and meritoriously, and soberly swear, that a single tumbler of whiskey punch shall not cross my lips during the twenty-four hours of the day, barring *twelve*, the locality of which is as followeth:

"Imprimis—Two tumblers at home	2
Secundo—Two more ditto at my son Dan's	2
Tertio—Two more ditto behind my own garden	2
Quarto—One ditto at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's	1
Quinto—Two more ditto at Frank M'Carroll's, of Kilclay	2
Sexto—One ditto wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Cargah	1
Septimo—Two more ditto wid honest Roger M'Gaugy, of Nurchasey	2

12

N.B.—I except in case any Doethor of Physic might think it right and medical to ordher me ~~more~~ for my health; or in case I could get Father Mulcahy to take the oath off of me for a start, at a wedding, or a christening, or at any other meeting of friends where there's drink.

Witness present,
Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath,
June the 4th, 18—.

his
Peter X Connell.
mark.

"~~and~~ I certify that I have made and calculated this oath for Misther Pether Connell, Merchant, and that it is strictly and arithmetically proper and correct.

"Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath

"Dated this 4th day of June, 18—."

"I think, Misther O'Flaherty, it's a dacent oath, as it stands. Plase God I'll swear to it some time to-morrow *evenin'*."

"Dacent! Why I don't wish to become eulogistically addicted; but I'd back the same oath, for both grammar and arithmetic, against any that ever was drawn up by a lawyer—ay, by the great Counsellor himself!—but faith, I'd not face him at a Vow, for all that; he's the greatest man at a Vow in the three kingdoms."

"I'll tell you what I'm thinkin', Masther—as my hand's in, mightn't I as well take another wid an ould frind o' mine, Owen Smith, of Lisbuy? He's a dacent ould resindenther, an' likes it. It'll make the baker's, or the long dozen."

"Why, it's not a bad thought; but won't thirteen get into your head?"

"No, nor three more to the back o' that. I only begin to get hearty about seventeen; so that the long dozen, afther all, is best; for God he knows, I've a regard for Owen Smith this many a year, an' I wouldn't wish to lave him out."

"Very well—I'll add it up to the other part of the oath."

'Octavo—One ditto out of respect for dacent Owen Smith, of Lisbuy . . . 1'

Now I must make the total amount thirteen, an' all will be right."

"Masther, have you a prayer-book widin?—bekase if you have, I may as well swear it here, an' you can witness it."

"Katty, hand over the *Spiritual Exercises*—a book aquil to the Bible itself for piety an' devotion."

"Sure they say, Masther, any book that the name o' God's in, is good for an oath. Now, wid the help o' goodness, repate the words afore me, an' I'll sware thim."

O'Flaherty hemmed two or three times, and complied with Peter's wishes, who followed him in the words until the oath was concluded. He then kissed the book, and expressed himself much at ease, as well, he said, upon the account of Ellish's soul, as for the sake of his children.

For some time after this, his oath was the standing jest of the neighbourhood: even to this day, Peter Connell's oath against liquor is a proverb in that part of the country. Immediately after he had sworn, no one could ever perceive that he violated it in the slightest degree; indeed there could be no doubt as to his literally fulfilling it. A day never passed in which he did not punctually pay a friendly visit to those whose names were dotted down, with whom he sat, pulled out his flask, and drank his quantum. In the meantime the poor man was breaking down rapidly; so much so, that his appearance generally excited pity, if not sorrow, among his neighbours. His character became simpler every day, and his intellect evidently more exhausted. The inoffensive humour, for which he had been noted, was also completely on the wane; his eye waxed dim, his step feeble, but the benevolence of his heart never failed him. Many acts of his private generosity are well known, and still remembered with gratitude.

In proportion as the strength of his mind and constitution diminished, so did his capacity for bearing liquor. When he first bound himself by

the oath not to exceed the long dozen, such was his vigour, that the effects of thirteen tumblers could scarcely be perceived on him. This state of health, however, did not last. As he wore away, the influence of so much liquor was becoming stronger, until at length he found that it was more than he could bear, that he frequently confounded the names of the men, and the number of tumblers mentioned in the oath, and sometimes took in, in his route, persons and places not to be found in it at all. This grieved him, and he resolved to wait upon O'Flaherty for the purpose of having some means devised of guiding him during his potations.

"Masther," said he, "we must thry an' make this oath somethin' plainer. You see, whin I get confused, I'm not able to remimber things as I ought. Sometimes, instid o' one tumbler, I take two at the wrong place; an' sarra bit o' me but called in an' had three wid ould Jack Rogers, that isn't in it at all. On another day I had a couple wid honest Barney Casey, an my way acrass to Bartle Gorman's. I'm not what I was, Masther, ahagur; so I'd thank you to dhraw it out more clearer, if you can, nor it was."

"I see, Mr. Connell; I comprehend wid the greatest ase in life, the very plan for it. We must reduce the oath to Geography, for I'm at home there, bein' a Surveyor * myself. I'll lay down a map o' the parish, an' draw the houses of your friends at their proper places, so that you'll never be out o' your latitude at all."

"Faix, I doubt *that*, Masther—ha, ha, ha!" replied Peter; "I'm afeard I will, of an odd time, for I'm not able to carry what I used to do; but no matther: thry what you can do for me this time, any how. I think I could bear the long dozen still, if I didn't make mistakes."

O'Flaherty accordingly set himself to work; and as his knowledge, not only of the parish, but of every person and house in it, was accurate, he soon had a tolerably correct skeleton map of it drawn for Peter's use.

"Now," said he, "lend me your ears."

"Faix, I'll do no sich thing," replied Peter—"I know a thrick worth two of it. Lend you my ears, inagh †—catch me at it! You have a bigger pair of your own nor I have—ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, in other words, pay attintion. Now, see this dot—that's your own house."

"Put a crass there," said Peter, "an' thin I'll know it's the Crass-roads."

"Upon my reputation, you're right; an' that's what I call a good specimen of ingenuity. I'll take the hint from that, an' we'll make it a Hieroglyphical as well as a Geographical oath. Well, there's a crass, wid two tumblers. Is that clear?"

"It is, it is! Go an."

"Now here we draw a line to your son Dan's. Let me see; he keeps a mill, an' sells cloth. Very good. I'll dhraw a mill-wheel an' a yard-wand. There's two tumblers. Will you know that?"

* If the reader remember the advertisement in the Hedge School, he may also recollect that the Hedge masters were often employed as land-surveyors.

† Forsooth.

"I see it: go an, nothin' can be clearer. So far I can't go astray."

"Well, what next? Two behind your own garden. What metaphor for the garden? Let me see!—let me cogitate! A dragon—the Hesperides! That's beyant *you*. A bit of a hedge will do, an' a gate."

"Don't put a gate in, it's not lucky. You know when a man takes to dhrink, they say he's goin' a grey gate, or a black gate, or a bad gate. Put that out, an' make the hedge longer, an' it'll do—wid the two tumblers, though."

"They're down. One at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's. How will we thranslate the priest?"

"Faix, I doubt that will be a difficquilt business."

"Upon my reputation, I agree wid you in that, especially whin he repates Latin. However, we'll see. He writes P.P. afther his name; —pee-pee is what we call the turkeys wid. What 'ud you think o' two turkeys?"

"The priest would like them roasted, but I couldn't undherstand that. No; put down the sign o' the horsewhip, or the cudgel; for he's handy, an' argues well wid both?"

"Good! I'll put down the horsewhip first, an' the cudgel alongside of it; then the tumbler, an' there 'ill be the sign o' the priest."

"Ay do, Masther, an' faix the priest 'ill be complate—there can be no mistakin' him thin. Divil a one but that's a good thought!"

"There it is in black an' white. Who comes next? Frank M'Carroll. He's a farmer. I'll put down a spade an' a harrow. Well, that's done—two tumblers."

"I won't mistake that aither. It's clear enough."

"Bartle Gorman's of Cargah. Bartle's a little lame, an' uses a staff wid a cross on the end that he houlds in his hand. I'll put down a staff wid a cross on it."

"Would there be no danger of me mistakin' that for the priest's cudgel?"

"Divil the slightest. I'll pledge my knowledge of geography, they're two very different weapons."

"Well, put it down—I'll know it."

"Roger M'Gaugy of Nurchasy. What for him? Roger's a pig-driver. I'll put down a pig. You'll comprehend that?"

"I ought; for many a pig I sould him in my day. Put down the pig; an' if you could put two black spots upon his back, I'd know it to be one I sould him about four years agone—the fattest ever was in the country—it had to be brought home on a car, for it wasn't able to walk wid fat."

"Very good; the spots are on it. The last is Owen Smith of Lisbuy. Now, do you see that I've drawn a line from place to place, so that you have nothing to do only to keep to it as you go. What for Owen?"

"Owen! Let me see—Owen! Pooh! What's come over me that I've nothing for Owen? Ay! I have it. He's a horse-jockey: put down a grey mare I sould him about five years agone."

"I'll put down a horse; but I can't make a grey mare wid black ink."

"Well, make a mare of her, any way."



"Faith, an' that same puzzles me. Stop, I have it; I'll put a foal along wid her."

"As good as the bank. God bless you, Mither O'Flaherty. I think this'll keep me from mistakes. An' now, if you'll slip up to me afther dusk, I'll send you down a couple o' bottles and a fitch. Sure you desearve more for the throuble you tuck."

Many of our readers, particularly of our English readers, will

be somewhat startled to hear, that, except the change of names and places, there is actually little exaggeration in the form of this oath; so just is the observation, that the romance of truth frequently far exceeds that of fiction.

Peter had, however, over-rated his own strength in supposing that he could bear the long dozen in future; ere many months passed, he was scarcely able to reach the half of that number without sinking into intoxication. Whilst in this state, he was in the habit of going to the graveyard in which his wife lay buried, where he sat, and wept like a child, sang her favourite songs, or knelt and offered up his prayers for the repose of her soul. None ever mocked him for this; on the contrary, there was always some kind person to assist him home. And as he staggered on, instead of sneers and ridicule, one might hear such expressions as these:—

"Poor Pether! he's nearly off; an' a dacent, kind neighbour he ever was. The death of the wife broke his heart—he never ris his head since."

"Ay, poor man! God pity him! He'll soon be sleepin' beside her, beyant there, where she's lyin'. It was never known of Peter Connell that he offinded man, woman, or child, since he was born, barrin' the gaugers, bad luck to them, afore he was marrid—but *that* was no offence. Sowl, he was *their* match, any how. When he an' the wife's gone, they won't lave their likes behind them. The sons are *bodaghs*—gintlemen,

now; an' it's nothin' but dinners an' company. Ahagur, that wasn't the way their hard-workin' father an' mother made the money that they 're houldin' their heads up wid such consequence upon."

The children, however, did not give Peter up as hopeless. Father Mulcahy, too, once more assailed him on his weak side. One morning, when he was sober, nervous, and depressed, the priest arrived, and finding him at home, addressed him as follows:—

"Peter, I 'm sorry, and vexed, and angry, this morning; and you are the cause of it."

"How is that, your Reverence?" said Peter. "God help me," he added, "don't be hard an me, Sir, for I 'm to be pitied. Don't be hard on me, for the short time I 'll be here. I know it won't be long—I 'll be wid *her* soon. Asthore machree, we'll be together, I hope, afore long—an', oh! if it was the will o' God, I would be glad it was afore night!"

The poor, shattered, heart-broken creature wept bitterly, for he felt somewhat sensible of the justice of the reproof which he expected from the priest, as well as undiminished sorrow for his wife.

"I 'm not going to be hard on you," said the good-natured priest; "I only called to tell you a dream that your son Dan had last night about you and his mother."

"About Ellish! Oh, for heaven's sake, what about her, Father, avourneen?"

"She appeared to him, last night," replied Father Mulcahy, "and told him that your drinking kept her out of happiness."

"Queen of heaven!" exclaimed Peter, deeply affected, "is that true? Oh," said he, dropping on his knees, "Father, ahagur machree, pardon me—oh, forgive me! I now promise, solemnly and seriously, to drink neither *in* the house nor *out* of it, for the time to come, not one drop at all, good, bad, or indifferent, of either whiskey, wine, or punch—*barrin' one glass*. Are you now satisfied? an' do you think she 'll get to happiness?"

"All will be well, I trust," said the priest. "I shall mention this to Dan and the rest, and depend upon it, they, too, will be happy to hear it."

"Here's what Mr. O'Flaherty an' myself made up," said Peter: "burn it, Father; take it out of my sight, for it's now no use to me."

"What is this at all?" said Mr. Mulcahy, looking into it. "Is it an oath?"

"It's the Joggraphy of one I swore some time ago; but it's now out of date—I'm done wid it."

The priest could not avoid smiling when he perused it, and on getting from Peter's lips an explanation of the hieroglyphics, he laughed heartily at the ingenious shifts they had made to guide his memory.

Peter, for some time after this, confined himself to one glass, as he had promised; but he felt such depression and feebleness, that he ventured slowly, and by degrees, to *enlarge* the "glass" from which he drank. His impression touching the happiness of his wife was, that as he had for

several months strictly observed his promise, she had probably during that period gone to heaven. He then began to exercise his ingenuity gradually, as we have said, by using, from time to time, a glass larger than the preceding one; thus receding from the spirit of his vow to the letter, and increasing the quantity of his drink from a small glass to the most capacious tumbler he could find. The manner in which he drank this was highly illustrative of the customs which prevail on this subject in Ireland. He remembered, that in making the vow, he used the words, "neither *in* the house nor *out* of it;" but in order to get over this dilemma, he usually stood with one foot outside the threshold, and the other in the house, keeping himself in that position which would render it difficult to determine whether he was either out or in. At other times, when he happened to be upstairs, he usually thrust one half of his person out of the window, with the same ludicrous intention of keeping the letter of his vow.

Many a smile this adroitness of his occasioned to the lookers-on; but further ridicule was checked by his wo-begone and afflicted look. He was now a mere skeleton, feeble and tottering.

One night in the depth of winter he went into the town where his two sons resided; he had been ill in mind and body during the day, and he fancied that change of scene and society might benefit him. His daughter and son-in-law, in consequence of his illness, watched him so closely, that he could not succeed in getting his usual "glass." This offended him, and he escaped without their knowledge to the son who kept the inn. On arriving there, he went up stairs, and by a *douceur* to the waiter, got a large tumbler filled with spirits. The lingering influences of a conscience that generally felt strongly on the side of moral duty, though poorly instructed, prompted him to drink it in the usual manner, by keeping one-half of his body, as nearly as he could guess, out of the window, that it might be said he drank it neither in nor out of the house. He had scarcely finished his draught, however, when he lost his balance, and was precipitated upon the pavement. The crash of his fall was heard in the bar, and his son, who had just come in, ran, along with several others, to ascertain what had happened. They found him, however, only severely stunned. He was immediately brought in, and medical aid sent for; but, though he recovered from the immediate effects of the fall, the shock it gave to his broken constitution, and his excessive grief, carried him off in a few months afterwards. He expired in the arms of his son and daughter, and amidst the tears of those who knew his simplicity of character, his goodness of heart, and his attachment to the wife by whose death that heart had been broken.

Such was the melancholy end of the honest and warm-hearted Peter Connell, who, unhappily, was not a solitary instance of a man driven to habits of intoxication and neglect of business by the force of sorrow, which time and a well-regulated mind might otherwise have overcome. We have held him up, on the one hand, as an example worthy of imitation in that industry and steadiness which, under the direction of his wife, raised him from poverty to independence and wealth; and, on the other,

as a man resorting to the use of spirituous liquors that he might be enabled to support affliction—a course which, so far from having sustained him under it, shattered his constitution, shortened his life, and destroyed his happiness. In conclusion, we wish our countrymen of Peter's class would imitate him in his better qualities, and try to avoid his failings.

